

# 騎士 & 魔法

Knight's & Magic 1

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Knight's & Magic

1

# ナイツ & マジック

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## **Knight's & Magic Vol 1 Prologue**

It was already evening when the glaring sun set on the horizon, its shadows expanding across the territory. The roads absorbed a lot of heat during the day, but released it back into the air at this time. It was going to be another night too warm to sleep comfortably.

This was K city's K district, a place where the above scene was commonplace.

The city station was surrounded by skyscrapers, each accommodating a myriad of companies. 'K Softworks', a mid-sized software company, sat on the 4th floor.

In its cool air-conditioned office, several men stared silently at their computer screens. The atmosphere was tense. For a mid-sized company's employees, their daily workload was always heavy, but today's load was exceptionally heavy.

"We only have 3 days left to finish it..."

A man sitting at one end of the office mumbled with a hint of despair. He was currently battling with a time bomb ticking towards an explosion, also known as a deadline. Due to the downturn of the nation's economy, the anxious sales team had grudgingly accepted the contract, even though its demands were unreasonable. Even during the planning phase, the project managed by him had little room for error. Repeated failures made it even more perilous; the situation

could only be described as 'hellish'. And there were even more pressing issues.

"Nakai Section Chief, Sato is down! He's not reacting even when we splash him with water!"

"Nakai Section Chief, we won't make it in time if we don't finish the coding today."

"...Nakai-san, Takeda's desk has a resignation letter on it..."

"Ah-- Shut up! How can we meet the deadline with things like this--!"

The man with his back against the corner, Section Chief Nakai, finally broke down. He hugged his head and rested it on his table.

There wasn't any time to waste, but he knew the task was impossible with how short on manpower they were... The deadline was looming, but there weren't any obvious solutions, pushing his psyche to the breaking point.

"Nakai-san."

"What is it now!?"

He raised his head after hearing someone address him, and as he opened his eyes a man with a gentle smile appeared.

"I have finished the case on my side, and I am ready to assist you."

"Oh... Kurata... Are you fine with joining in?"

The pain on Nakai's face was swept away, like a man who saw a ray of light in the midst of despair.

"I browsed through the specification manual and I've gotten the gist of the situation. Can you let me handle the progress management?"

"Of... Of course, I might as well give you my password, you can flip through the management folders too. Take care of all that please."

"Eh, Nakai-san, I can't manage all that... Erm, the coding parts are holding back the progress, let me settle this..."

The man speaking with Nakai, Kurata Tsubasa, sat down on the chair prepared by Nakai and started working immediately. He typed in code in the editor, all-the-while reading the progress reports and the specification manual. As he did this he gave instructions to the colleagues around him.

"Ensure the testing machine is operational, test analyst, take this opportunity to rest. Erm, we will begin intensive testing after 12. For coding... Tatsu-san, can you complete 2 modules? Yes, I will do the other 10. Kiba, there are some weird parts in the specification manual, please fix them and resume testing."

He was 28 years old, considered part of the younger generation within the workplace, but no one questioned his instructions. This was due to his track record in the company. Since he started working there, he was commonly an inspiration to his half-dead coworkers. Since he was on the case, it meant the job's end was in sight. Humans are realistic creatures, if they can see the ending, they can endure it no matter how tough it is.

"Alright, that should do it. I will start coding."

"Hey, Kurata, will you be fine? 10 modules... That is no laughing matter."

"Nakai-san, did you forget? My actual profession is programmer."

With his eyes half closed a fearless smile appeared on Kurata's gentle face. He put his fingers on the keyboard, and all 10 fingers started dancing at a frightening speed. He typed in code on several editors that were open on his screen, processing the data like a torrent. The mature man sitting opposite him, Tatsu, threw himself into his work when he heard the amazing typing sound.

"As expected of the "Last Line of Defense" for the company, he has been handling all the troubling cases so far... I have to keep up."

Everyone put their heart into their work, and the sluggish battle improved dramatically.



The radio broadcast announced the time. The clock on the wall indicated it was 5:15pm -- time to get off work. According to company policy, working hours had ended, but Kurata simply stretched his back and rotated his tired shoulders.

He had been salvaging this case for three days. Today was the dreaded deadline, but the atmosphere was no longer as desperate as it was three days prior. The case was thought to be hopeless by everyone before, yet it was rescued under his expert hands.

Thanks to him finishing the program in one day, and the other team members working without rest, they managed to barely finish the product before the deadline. Although Kurata finished so much work in such a short amount of time, he managed each part perfectly, a miraculous talent beyond comprehension. Sadly, his skill was outstanding because he was always handed the troubling cases.

After the long series of battles, empty cans of coffee and energy drinks were piled up like gravestones on his desk. Looking at his sides, he could see the warriors (test analysts) smiling peacefully, collapsed on beds made out of chairs. Kurata had decreased his sleeping hours to the bare minimum, and he too felt that it was time to rest up.

"Alright, the client acknowledged the receipt of the product! We are done! Great news everyone, now we can rest easy!"

Kurata woke from his half asleep state and saw the elated Nakai in a victory pose. He thought about going home to rest, but decided to nap for a while. By the time he woke up to go home, it was already time for the last train.

Several days after the death march, the end of the month was here. Speaking of end of the month, people were thinking of -- that's right, the gospel of all working adults, payday.

Kurata turned off the computer and prepared to leave in a hurry. He was not alone, his colleagues also started to leave. Following popular trends, companies had cut down the working hours of office workers. The companies have the obligation to let their staff leave on time, especially on payday. Although it was an obligation, this rule was often overlooked when things get hectic. But compared to the hellish time they had just a few days before, it was much more relaxed now.

Today was a happy Friday. Some were rushing to meet their family, others were gathering with their friends, getting ready to splurge. There were others who just want to rest at home. Everybody was different, but for those getting their salary, this day they looked forward to coinciding with the weekend made it a happy occasion.

Kurata was the same too. Several colleagues who went through the



death march gathered at his side.

"Kurata, want to get a drink? You were a big help, the first one is on me."

Nakai made a drinking gesture, with other people that worked on the project such as Tatsu and Kiba standing behind him. Kurata was about to join them, but he remembered his planned schedule and hesitated.

"Ah-- Sorry Nakai-san, I have an engagement, maybe next time."

"Nakai-san, today is the day, Kurata's hobby..."

"Oh... That. Can't be helped, don't skip out next time."

"Okay."

Kurata watched the group leave, and headed toward his destination as well. The young, talented man known as the "Last Line of Defense", depended on by everyone in the company, had a unique hobby well known within the company.

On this weekend, the streets were humid in the summer heat, crowded with office workers getting off work. The way to the station was jammed with people. After walking some distance away, the traffic got smoother.

"Over. Time. Pay! Get!"

A man-- Kurata, yelled in front of the ATM. If he had done that in front of a manned counter, he would probably be reported to the police for acting suspiciously.

His emotion stemmed from the cold figures displayed on the ATM screen. The cases he handled were usually stressful and dangerous, but his efforts paid off in the form of overtime pay, so his savings increased steadily.

Without smiling, Kurata withdrew some cash and hurried towards his destination. His movements had no hesitation, a sign that he had gone through this route many times. A building appeared in front of him shortly. That was a major electronics shopping center near the train station. On the 3rd floor was a huge toys department-- his goal.



A few hours later, a man left the toys department while the store's closing music played.

"As expected of the month end sale. This is great."

The man carried two full bags in each hand, both double layered to prevent tearing. His backpack was also bulging in a strange shape. His bags were filled with plastic models. He was a 'model nerd'.

"Surfacer, paint, tools have been resupplied... the modeling festival shall begin..."

For his hectic lifestyle, the shopping spree on payday and the modeling festival was his biggest joy. It might have been the dull and normal lifestyle taking a toll on him, but the number of models he purchased increased every year. It finally became a monthly habit, and he was now completely addicted.

He wore his silly smile, walking home with his bags happily. The apartment he stayed in was some distance away from the company, the station sat between his residence and the company. He needed to make a detour whenever he visited the electronics shopping center, but it wasn't a big deal since he got what he was after. Kurata made his way past the quiet residential zone humming joyfully. The traffic was very light that hour.

The sound of an engine broke the silence, and the oncoming headlights restricted his vision. With the lights from the distance blinding him, he hurried to the side of the road. The road was relatively wide, but it would be bad if one of his bags broke. Kurata frowned at the usage of high beams the residential area, but he paid it no mind and continued walking.

The dazzling headlights fatally slowed his reaction. The car came straight at him with no sign of stopping. By the time he realized it, it was too late for him to avoid it.

"Hey, wait..."

The roar of the engine reverberated in his ears, and his vision was drowned out by the lights. He felt a chill down his back.

He collided with the car while hugging his bags. At the moment of impact, he heard his body make a frightening sound. As his body flew through the air, before he lost consciousness because of the pain, all sorts of emotions flashed through his mind. But he did not see his life flash before his eyes, or curse his luck in being a victim in this accident.

*(Ah, I can't make the models I just bought and the series of models that will be released next month, such a shame...!)*

In his mind was the passion he had for the models he wouldn't be able to assemble anymore.



-- This just in.

Around 10pm tonight, a man collided with a car in K city S district. The victim was an office worker residing in the area, Kurata Tsubasa(28). An ambulance was dispatched after a resident made a report, but they failed to resuscitate the victim. According to the police investigation, the suspect was driving under the influence--"



**School Entry Arc**

# **Knight's & Magic Vol 1 Chapter 1**

# 騎士&魔法 1

Knight's & Magic

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A place he did not belong to, a different world.

This world had no name, the people had not completely explored it. They thought the continents they lived upon encompassed their whole world, and one such continent in this world was Zetterlund.

The Zetterlund Continent was split into an eastern and western region by the Aubigne mountain range. Divided by the mountain range, each region contained its own unique environment. The west was ruled by several countries controlled by humans, known collectively as the Western Union. To the east was the Bocuse sea of trees ruled by powerful Demonic creatures -- the nest of Demonic Beasts.

However, the eastern region of Zetterlund was not totally devoid of all humans. There existed a solitary human nation, known as the kingdom of Fremmevira. Because this country was on the border of the sea of trees, it was also the first line of defence in the war against the Demon beasts. To counter the roaming Demon beasts the nation raised an army of knights and has maintained it to this day. They were prideful in their role as the shield of humanity and the Western Union and became known as the 'nation of knights'.

In the year C.E. 1268 the story with this continent as its background began.

At the base of the mountain Aubigne, which reached up to the clouds, was the Capital of Fremmevira, Känkänen. If you travelled east for half a day on carriage, you would then reach a large town. This town was unique because more than half of its space was taken up by a single facility. It was a fortified building made with bricks and stones, yet it didn't feel intimidating and was not meant for military use. This building was an educational institute for children known as 'Laihiala pilot academy'.

Knights defend the people against Demon beast attacks. As part of the glorious nation of knights, they were popular in Fremmevira, and it



was a highly respected occupation. As a country prone to attacks due to its geographic location, they needed the support of a large army. Training knights was then made a priority for the nation, leading to the expansion of the educational organization for knights, Laihiala pilot academy.

A low thud reverberated within the building crafted of stone masonry.

This place had wide flooring of stone, surrounded by stone walls and seats. This oval shaped training ground was situated in a corner of the academy.

In the centre of the grounds were two knights facing off with their swords. They were both heavily armoured, one with a sword and shield, the other wielding a 2-handed sword. The training ground was used for mock battles. The two knights were going through all sorts of drills, and the swords they were using were blunted to avoid injury.

The two knights took the exercises seriously even though they were only practicing. They pointed the swords at each other, carefully gauging the distance of the opponent. A gust of wind blew sand into the air. The breath-taking stare down ended, and both of them launched their attacks simultaneously, closing the gap between them in an instant. They moved into combat range so nimbly that it was unbelievable to think that they were in full battle armour.

But there was something off with about scene, the ground was shaking with each step of the fighters, emitting a low and heavy thud into the air. Normal humans shouldn't make such heavy sounds with their footsteps even if they are fully armoured.

The answer lay with their surroundings.

There were people on the audience seats watching the knight's duel, but their figures were much smaller than the knights. No, the opposite

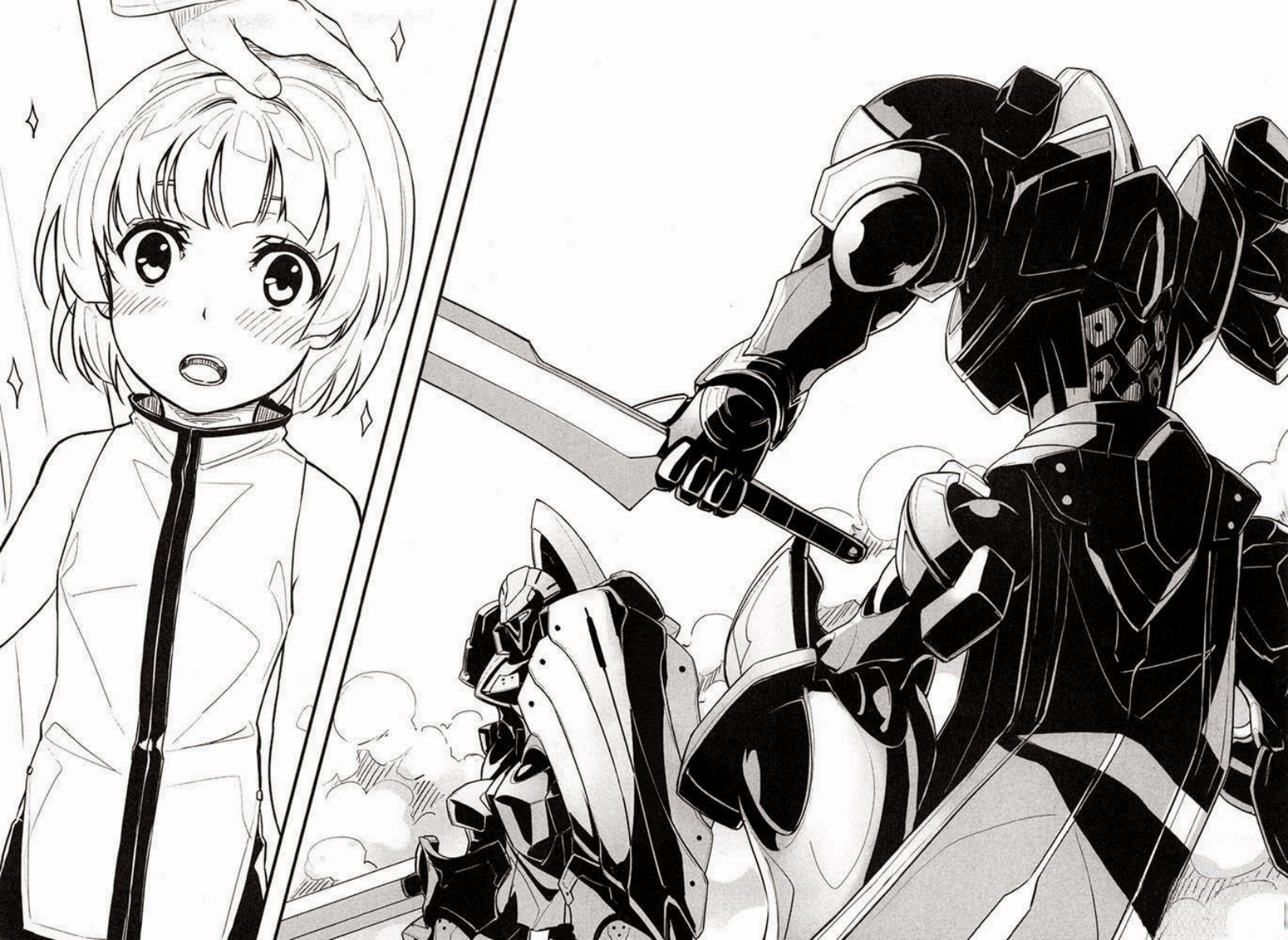
was true; it was the knights that were too big. If the size of the knights and the size of the audience were compared side by side, the knights would be at least 6 times larger. It was only natural for them to be heavy, and it was not an exaggeration to call them giants.

These giant knights were not human. They were actually Silhouette Knights, around 10 metres in height with metallic frames known as 'Inner Skeletons' and 'crystal tissues' acting as the muscles. Fuelled by mana, it was a hybrid robot spawned magic and machinery, a giant knight. They were weapons made to fight against the magic beasts, the strongest fighting unit known to mankind.

A short distance away from the battling Silhouette Knights, several figures were watching the fight, one of them had an exceptionally sharp gaze.

He was one of the battle instructors. In other words, his duty was to instruct the pilots handling the battling Silhouette Knights in order to train them to protect citizens from the demon beasts. He took in every single move of the battling trainees, giving off a serious air.

"It's ... Robots..."



A cute voice came from behind. The man turned and saw a beautiful lady walking towards him with a child in her arms. The lady had smooth, flowing silver hair with a hint of purple that reached to her waist. Her hair swayed in the wind as she walked, leaving a bright silver trail behind her. She had gentle blue eyes, pale white skin, and looked very young, between the age of 15 to 20. Despite her young age, she was already married and had a child.

The demonic instructor, whose face was feared by all, showed a rare smile. People who knew him might have been shocked, but it would not be surprising if you were in the warm presence of the lady.

"Tina, what brings you here? It's really rare to see you visit the academy."

"I just wanted to let Eru see his father's workplace, so I made a detour from our usual stroll."

"I see. Eru, what do you think about dad's job?"

The man asked the child held by his wife but was completely ignored. The child kept waving his short limbs about, staring intently at the Silhouette Knights sparring on the training ground.

"Eh, he doesn't seem to be listening..."

The man smiled as he patted his 3 year old son's head. The son had inherited his mother's adorable features -- silver hair with a touch of purple, an oval face exactly like his mother's when she was young, and a pair of bright blue eyes. His sharp gaze showed a hint of his paternal heritage.

"Ara, Eru, you are paying more attention to the Silhouette Knights than your own father, just like a boy. Do you really like Silhouette Knights so much?"



"I heard that lots of kid dream of being a knight, Eru seems to think so too."

Both parents smiled as they watched Eru display his curiosity for this boyish interest. He was so cute. The little boy watched the scene excitedly while waving his arms and legs, unfazed with being the centre of attention. He focused on the training ground without blinking, displaying his exceptional concentration . The man rubbed his son's soft hair for a while but gave up after getting no reaction.

"You really like it huh. How is it? Eru those are Silhouette Knights, gigantic warriors that defend our kingdom."

"Silhouette... Knight..."

The child seemed to acknowledge the words of the man for the first time, repeating his words with a slur unique to toddlers as he fell deep into thought. The man smiled bitterly after seeing his child behave this way and returned to his post after conversing with his wife for a while. On the training ground, the gigantic knights finished their match and were preparing to leave.

"Right, let's return home. We need to prepare dinner and wait for daddy to return."

The lady coaxed the child who kept looking back, reluctant to go. They were going home.

"Silhouette Knight..."

The child in her arms watched the gigantic knights on the training ground until they were out of sight.

The child's full name, referred to as Eru, was Ernesti Echevarria. He was the son of Mathias Echevarria, instructor of Laihiala Pilot

Academy, borne by his mother Celestina.

It had been three years since his birth. This was the age when a child forms his sense of self, a period when they become playful. But Eru was very sensible. He understood his parents from an early age and was well behaved. Everyone felt that he was a bright kid, but his intelligence came from another source.

Ever since forming his sense of self, the development of his own character, he became aware of memories he had never experienced before -- the memory of a past where he lived in another place. A place called Japan, a the civilization of computers, and the name Kurata Tsubasa.

A theory known as reincarnation.

Reincarnation describes the phenomenon that occurs when the spirits of those who have died in the world are reborn into the world over and over again. It is mentioned in Buddhism, and all Japanese would have heard about this theory whether they believed in it or not. Kurata was no exception, but he didn't believe in it at that time and never expected to experience it himself. He had even retained the experiences from his previous life, a successful reincarnation.

But himself included, no one truly knew what happened. The only thing he was sure of was that he was Ernesti in this world and was Kurata Tsubasa in his previous world. That's why, compared to children around his age, he had an 'experienced' mind and a calm and matured analytical ability.

Because of the of his mother's whim, he visited his father's workplace. The impact of this visit inspired him to devote his 2nd chance at life to this.

When the sun started to set in the west, a lady and a child walked

along the streets of Laihiala academy.

The boy kept asking about the gigantic knights that he had seen, and his mother answered him gently and patiently. Looking at her excited son, the mother cheerfully replied:

"You really like Silhouette Knights don't you, does Eru want to be a knight in the future?"

"Knight... Okay! I want to be a knight!"

"Ara, such a dependable child. Let's ask daddy to teach you when you get a little older alright?"

"Okay!"

No one knew what would occur because of this dimension travel. But he was certain that his second life as Ernesti Echevalier was developing beyond his control.

The Echevarria residence was situated near Laihiala academy.

Apart from this family, the people in this nation awaken early. As the sun was rising in the east, the young mother Celestina got up to prepare breakfast. When she was done, the whole family ate together as usual.

The only child of the family, Ernesti, awoke the latest.

"Silhouette Knight!"

Eru seemed to have dreamt of something as he kicked off his blanket and leapt up from bed. He was unaware of his mother laughing because of his yell. Eru looked around him, realized he was in the bedroom, and climbed back into bed.

He was too excited last night and couldn't sleep. Instead, he lay in a dreamlike state, smiling in his bed.

(Those are robots, and humanoid in shape, gigantic humanoid robots...!)

Ernesti -- or rather the Japanese Kurata Tsubasa shed a tear of joy in his heart for this unexpected blessing and couldn't stop smiling. Retaining the memories of Kurata Tsubasa means he inherited similar interests and hobbies from his previous life. In Eru's previous life he was Kurata Tsubasa, a heavily addicted robot nerd.

As a working adult, he spent almost all of his income on his hobby, browsing modelling magazines and games, even searching for visual works at times. He put double the effort into his hobby compared to others, it wouldn't be wrong to say that he was obsessed. But despite his obsession, he was still an ordinary man. He didn't have the passion to join the self-defence force just for the chance to operate a tank. But the situation was different in this life. That's right, gigantic humanoid robots -- Silhouette Knights actually existed here.

When he 'awakened', he was disappointed to find himself in a world with no models or computers. But he was grateful from the bottom of his heart for this miracle, be it by chance or the will of a mysterious force allowing him to reincarnate in this world, his disappointment changed when he discovered that Silhouette Knights. This was not a joke, gigantic humanoid weapons 10 metres in height actually existed. For a robot nerd like him, seeing the Silhouette Knights had enough impact to completely change his life. In other words, he believed the reason that he came to this world was to pilot these gigantic robots. He had no basis for it, but he still believed this strongly.

He had the resolve, but his tiny body lost to his sleepiness, and he napped for a bit more before breakfast was ready.



It was almost noon, Celestina and Eru were in Mathias's study room.

The study was filled with simple but practical wooden furniture that was kept clean and tidy. Mathias was primarily a sword instructor, but he was involved in other fields as well. The shelves in the study room were filled with all sorts of literature, including picture books for children.

Tina sat on the couch in the room, resting the tiny Eru on her lap, reading the picture book slowly to him. She spoke clearly and calmly. Eru, who was enjoying this yesterday, listened for some time before he started to fidget. He called out to his mother:

"Mom, mom."

"What is it Eru? You don't like this book?"

Tina tilted her head, but Eru's next words dispelled her confusion.

"I like books... But, I want to know more about Silhouette Knights!"

Tina set the book aside and studied Eru's expression. Looking at his bright eyes filled with curiosity and joy, she couldn't turn him down.

"Ara ara, I see. Although it is still early for you Eru, if you want to pilot the Silhouette Knights, you have to first become a knight."

"Knight... how do I become a knight?"

Eru had a fixed goal in mind, but he was still a 3 year old toddler body-wise. Even with the intellect of a grown man, his actions were still restricted, including the most crucial part, information gathering . How does a toddler, with limited access to resources, obtain information? He has to rely on his parents.

"Let's see, you need to read many books and practice swordsmanship. Right, let your daddy teach you about swords. Your father teaches swords in the academy anyway. How about reading your favourite book where Silhouette Knights make an appearance okay?"

"Okay!"

Eru finally focused back on the book. Tina rubbed his head, took out a book related to Silhouette Knights, and read it to him slowly. Eru listened to the story that was simple enough for a child to understand excitedly.

Eru imagined himself piloting the gigantic knight, standing before humongous demon beasts in order to protect those in danger. He reforged his mind once again. He wanted to pilot a Silhouette Knight no matter what and the sooner the better. To achieve this, he needed to use his mature mindset to his advantage and achieve all he could within his power. He prepared a schedule for the future in his mind, but for now, he listened quietly to the story.

"Dad, do you have a minute?"

Mathias Echevarria, who was resting in the study, heard the sound from behind him. He turned and saw his son Ernesti Echevarria run towards him. Eru, who was now 5 years old, had a bowl cut, with his hair just above the eyebrows. He had bright silvery purple hair just like his mother; the resemblance to her cute appearance remained the same. Even the strict Mathias with his merciless face smiled often in front of Eru.

"Oh, I have time. What is it Eru?"

"I want to ask for a favour, dad."

Eru was young, but he spoke clearly. His slightly slurred speech when he was 3 was now smooth at the age of 5. This child had always been polite to everyone since he was young. As his speech grew clearer, this becomes more obvious. But this didn't feel weird and actually complemented his cute and small appearance. Mathias smiled happily as he looked at Eru's pleading face. His 'doting' towards his son had been getting worse over time.

"Dad, I want to be a knight, please teach me swordsmanship."

It's finally time. Mathias was troubled, but he didn't show it on his face. He knew his son had been keen on being a knight ever since he was really young, and there was no problem with his goal. If he had the motivation, that would be great. But Eru was only 5 years old, so it was still too early to teach him swordsmanship. If they rush it before Eru's body develops, it would be detrimental to him. Also, Eru looked more similar to his wife with every passing year and was smaller in stature than children in his age group. To be honest, Mathias wondered if his son could even handle a sword.

But Mathias still faced his son firmly. Since Eru was showing his resolve, he couldn't ignore this as an instructor or a father. Mathias advised his son not to rush and start from building up his physical strength first. He also informed him that aside from swordsmanship, knowledge of magic would also help him in his quest to become a knight, encouraging him to study it.

"Magic... I understand dad, I will seek your advice on swordsmanship in the future."

Looking at the unwavering face of his son, Mathias nodded, promising to teach him swordsmanship one day.

".. That's what happened mom, please teach me magic!"

After making the promise with Mathias, Eru immediately went to Tina and asked her. Why was he asking his mother? Because Tina's father, who was Eru's grandfather, was the current dean of Laihiala pilot school -- Lauri Echevarria. Tina accepted gladly, gathering the necessary teaching materials within her means.

-- Magic.

It goes without saying that in Eru's previous life -- back on earth, magic did not exist, it appeared only in stories and fairy tales. Most people only heard about magic when playing role playing games like dungeons and dragons. But this powerful force existed in this world, and knights used magic often as support when fighting.

Under the guidance of his mother, who was doubling as a teacher, Eru read textbooks related to magic.

From the moment Eru decided to pilot a Silhouette Knight, Eru had started taking action. What he had been doing was the basics of the basics, simply learning to read. Learning to read at the age of 3 was a very early start. Even the privileged class of this country -- the aristocrats -- don't start so early. Because of this, Eru could handle materials that were quite advanced.

It was natural for kids to detest studying, but Eru was not a normal kid. All of his effort was for the goal of becoming a knight. When he thought about piloting a Silhouette Knight, studying was no hassle in comparison to the reward. He could even read through textbooks from cover to cover. Because the contents were so stiff, it was better to treat it like a game and enjoy it instead of thinking of it as studying. With the fast learning pace unique only to children, Eru learned the contents at an incredible pace.



Tina was not a teacher by profession, but she was managing it smoothly. She was the daughter of a school dean and wife of an instructor after all. She satisfied the wishes of Eru, teaching him magic patiently.

-- In simple terms, magic in this world referred to the skill in manipulating mana to perform physical phenomenon.

All living things in this world had the ability to convert the 'ether' in the air into mana and store a certain amount of it within their body.

"Mana is something like fuel, magic will be used in accordance to the content of the magic script to do things in the physical world through a catalyst."

Tina explained to Eru who was sitting down obediently.

There are two types of living beings in the world, divided into those who can use magic independently and those who can't. The difference lay in the existence of a catalyst within their body. For beings that can use magic, they have a crystal within their body that acts as a catalyst. For example, the strongest creatures known as dragons possess a catalyst, and their dragon breath is created using this.

"Humans don't have catalyst inside us, so we are a race that can't use magic."

Since humans didn't have a crystal catalyst, they couldn't use magic. Based on the laws of this world, this was a natural and undeniable fact. But people had learned of a way to use magic. This was the result of using their weapon called wisdom. As living beings of this world, humans could make use of mana and external catalysts to develop scripts gradually to use magic, successfully overcoming their weakness.



With this breakthrough, humans, who were always the weakest in the world, developed gigantic magic-powered weapons after years of research - the Silhouette Knights. This made the humans one of the most powerful races.

"Mom, since the Silhouette Knights are so powerful, and we have such a huge army of knights, we can build a bigger country right?"

"Maybe it can be done, but it is difficult."

Silhouette Knights may be powerful weapons, but they were tactical weapons that required large amounts of resources to build and maintain. It was practically impossible to prepare a force capable of dominating the land. Humanity used the Aubigne mountain range as the border to maintain peace on the western half of the continent. Fremmevira remained behind as a screen to protect their foothold in the east. The stalemate had been going on for centuries.

"I will leave the details for history class. You will learn about it in more detail when you start schooling."

Tina was talking about practical application of magic. As mentioned before, magic had to be conjured through scripts, and the construction and usage of scripts was performed by a virtual organ in the brain known as Magius circuit. In this world, all beings that are self-aware have the potential to use it.

"And Eru, scripts are sigils that perform specific phenomenon. First are the 'Architect'<TL: Kanji ==> Fundamental> sigils that perform basic phenomena, followed by the 'Control' sigils that coordinate and use Architect sigils."

By combining Architect sigils and Control sigils, the picture created was something similar to magic summoning circles on earth.

For beginners in magic , the part they will stumble upon is the

construction of the script. Most people can manipulate Architect sigils immediately, but using powerful spells by using more complex scripts requires a great amount of practice. As humans can't use magic naturally, creating high level magic requires the accumulation of experience. Apart from perseverance, this also requires natural talent.

(Architect sigils that determine the phenomenon and the control sigils that maximize its effects. Both of them combining by a set of fixed laws... Right, I have seen this before, this is just like...)

Eru's occupation in his past life -- programmer, helped him understand this part. In simple terms, the sigils and their interaction in the form of a script followed similar logic to program coding. The operation of the script by the magius circuit was similar to a virtual computer. Since the magius circuit was built within the brain, activating it didn't take time, performing better than computers in his previous life.

After Eru grasped the logic behind it, he 'extracted' the architect sigil and control sigil from the text book and started using his magius circuit -- which was within the human brain -- to start coding. With such a large amount of codes, even a veteran programmer wouldn't be able to organize it within their head; they would need the help of software editors. To counter this, Eru used the magius circuit domain as a software editor to plan and compile the scripts.

Because he was a beginner, he had no idea how much magic the people in this world could use. He didn't consider his ability to easily build and control the complicated programming language to be special.

Eru held a tiny wooden wand and focused with his eyes closed.

A small crystal was fixed onto the tip of the wand. That was the crystal catalyst, a miraculous item which allowed humans to use magic. For humans using magic, they prefer to wield wands with the crystal catalyst affixed onto the tip. The wand in Eru's hand made a gentle

'Pashu' sound, and a line of fire shot out, leaving a scorched mark on the middle of the target board. He just activated the fire architect sigil with beginner magic -- 'Fire torch'.

"Wow Eru, that's great. Although it is just the architect sigil, I never imagined that you would be able to use magic so quickly."

"But mom, the textbook says that this is the basics of the basics, anyone can use it immediately."

"It is true that anyone can activate it, but to hit the target so accurately requires practice. Eru has talent for magic."

No matter how good Eru was in programming, it was useless if he only studied the theory without putting it in practice. A simple target board in the backyard and Tina accompanied Eru for practical training. They practiced all types of architect sigils one by one, allowing Eru to get used to the feeling of using magic. After casting spells repeatedly, Eru started to feel weird... it felt like energy was gradually draining from his body. It was like the fatigue you feel after exercise but different at the same time. This unique experience confused him, but this was a natural effect of expending mana. He panted heavily and breathed in the ether from the air around him, attempting to replenish his mana.

(... I didn't know it was this tiring. If I used advanced spells, I would have probably fainted because of shortness of breath.)

Tina who had been supervising him walked over with a gentle smile and rubbed his head.

"This is how it feels when you expend mana. If you don't experience it now, it will be troubling in the future."

"... I can't catch my breath, it feels painful. My mana is empty with just a little magic use, so depressing."

"Don't be discouraged. You are still young, lacking mana is normal."

"Will I have more mana when I grow up?"

"Hmm -- Let me think. It's a bit different, but just think of it as something like stamina. The growth of mana is not solely dependent on your body growth. It will also get stronger as you train your psyche."

"I understand. Mom, since that's the case, I will be doing special training to increase my mana pool!"

Tina gave a bitter smile, rubbing the head of the spirited Eru.

"Ara, what a hardworking child. Don't be too impatient, going too fast might be bad too."

Eru reflected upon this and felt that he was being too rash. Tina was right, rushing wouldn't be good for him, and he didn't want his mother who was accompanying him to worry.

"Yes mom. I will take it slow and steady."

Eru promised his mother with a straight face. Tina nodded and hugged him tightly.

Eru started his special training the following day.

With the promise with Tina and the future in mind, he needed to improve his physical and magical abilities steadily. Constructing scripts was Eru's strength. he would be able to find a way to advance if he made use of his previous life's knowledge. The rest would depend on the mana he needed to use the magic. He persisted in his routine of jogging, physical exercise, depleting his mana, and

recovering it. As he was going through his fundamental training, he found an interesting magic in the textbook.

He was looking up physical boost spells. Physical boost means literally strengthening the capability of your body, including strength, stamina, and speed. Eru's plan was to incorporate this spell in his physical exercise, training both mind and body at the same time for efficiency.

The spell physical boost was a high spell, a spell that was difficult to use. The effects of the magic were dependent on the script. The simpler the structure, the closer it would be to the architect sigil, and conversely, the easier it would be to control; the more targets there are, the more complex and difficult it will become.

The high level complex spell physical boost had the ability of enhancing 'every muscle fibre', strengthening 'all of the bones' to absorb the impact, and the improvement of durability of the skin. There was a need to control the target of the spell, which changes rapidly with every movement. To use the effect, the script needed to be activated constantly. This was why the boosting spell was on a higher level than big, flashy spells, which did not require constant upkeep to maintain.

Normally, Eru would have given up at this stage and would have chosen a more practical spell. But he knew how to solve the issue because of his unique skills -- programming concept. He had experience in designing and coding software to handle multiple variables. That's why he skipped the beginner magic phase and jumped straight into the 'modified magic' phase. Reviewing the structure of the physical boost script, Eru compressed the structure to minimize the number of variables, creating subscripts that would automatically extract the status of the body. After compiling it, he just needed to design the user interface to make it easier to control so as to lessen the burden.

Complicated projects like the improvement of scripts was not something that could be easily done by anyone. Eru, however, was not aware of this, completing the improvement shortly, and the patch was a big enhancement. But even so, it was still difficult to control magic that strained the mind heavily. But with his extraordinary processing ability, it was not much. No one realized that a historical revolution had occurred, but for Eru, this was just a small step in his journey.

Everything was ready. Eru held a wand in his hand, activated the improved physical boost spell, and began his daily training regime excitedly. But his high spirited trip ended in tragedy, he didn't even have time to feel moved by his enhanced physical attributes before collapsing a few hundred metres away because of mana depletion.

As expected of an advanced spell, the controls were complicated and the mana cost was tremendous. Eru felt down because of this basic mistake and returned to his normal training regime for quite a while.

Even with the efforts he put in, he still needed 3 years before he could activate his physical boost magic for a sustainable amount of time. Eru was fuelled by his passion, moving towards his goal day by day.

## **Knight's & Magic Vol 1 Chapter 2**

Laihiala Pilot academy had a dormitory, several restaurants, and all sorts of shops. Various Silhouette Knight repair shops were gathered there as well, including lodging for related personnel, forming a large college city. Because Laihiala pilot academy was the top academic facility in the nation, the size of the city was not far off from the capital itself. The city adopted its name from the academy and was known as 'Laihiala Academy City', Ernesti resided in such a place.

The sun set beyond the walls that surrounded the city and night engulfed the academy city. Apart from a select few, most of the shops had closed for the day, only a handful of people still wandering the streets. The whole city fell into a peaceful silence. A petite figure ran along a path formed by the rooftops of the buildings. The figure was dressed in black that was difficult to see in the dark, moving like the wind along the roof.

And of course, this was the 8 year old Ernesti Echevarria. With the passage of time, his training had evolved from simple jogging into a round trip along the roofs of the buildings in the city. According to Eru, the wide field of vision and the undulating height of the buildings was perfect for training.

He learned from his failure in using physical boost spell in the past and further improved it, changing it into a spell with low mana cost, emphasizing just the legs for running. He had become accustomed to it, even strenuous movement wouldn't affect the script. His enhanced legs enabled him to sprint at a very fast pace.

As he ran, Eru came to the edge of a line of connected buildings; the edge was akin to a cliff with the road looming below. He took a deep breath, increasing his mana output. With the fierce reaction, he accelerated like an arrow fired from a bow, closing the gap to the edge in an instant. The moment he took his last step and leapt into the air



he activated another spell -- by compressing the air in front of him, he created a dense air bullet. This was originally basic wind magic, air bullet. Eru exploded the air bullet behind him, using the burst of energy from the release to push him forward.

The instantaneous acceleration threw Eru's body into the air, forming a beautiful arch in the sky. He activated his body strengthening magic in mid-air and cast another spell just before he landed. Another air bullet spell -- but the area of compressed air was much larger. He didn't fire off the air bullet like before. Instead, he used it as a cushion, landing nicely on the other roof. Eru rolled to reduce the impact, running off with the same speed as before.

The year was C.E. 1273.

It had been 3 years since Eru started his magic training. He practiced daily without rest, accumulating a large amount of mana within his petite body. Normally, a child wouldn't train so intensively in magic at such a young age, so it was not surprising for Eru to have grown so strong. The regime also trained his physical attributes, which increased dramatically, but it was a pity he couldn't use full body strengthening spells for an extended amount of time. That's why he invented low mana cost spells targeted at specific body parts, only using his full strength when necessary. He had also found a way to use other spells while moving at high speed. This training allowed Eru's outstanding processing ability to improve, increasing his mana pool while decreasing the mana expended.

There was a reason why Eru focused his magic on movement. He didn't spend all of his time on training, making time to play with other kids his age, so his parents wouldn't worry. Despite his reasons, he couldn't deny that playing like a kid again was fun. Eru slowly realized that his body was smaller than others, but he was not too bothered about it. If his growth remained stagnant, however, Eru's lack of weight might become his weak point.

Naturally, Eru planned to continue training his magic, not willing to fail because of his lack of abilities. Even so, his body being so light meant he had to put more consideration in regard to attack power. This was the reason he chose to strengthen his mobility. The speed would both disrupt enemies and increase attack power.

(That's right, just like Ushi wakamaru overcoming strength with skills, the Japanese way. Eh, although I didn't have much choice anyway.)

<TL:牛若丸>

Eru thought about these menial things as he ran in the dim street during the evening. A normal training route, the daily jogging regime, but something unexpected happened.

"Eh? Someone is coming." A girly voice came from above. A stern voice followed: "Who are you?"

"...Is someone there?" The questions from both parties overlapped each other. Eru had never ran into anyone during his rooftop training before, this was the first time he did.

They remained silent for quite a while. They met someone at a place that was normally devoid of people, so it was understandable to be cautious. One of them was dressed in black with his hood up, a suspicious outfit.

Eru observed the other party. The weak starlight made visibility low, but he could vaguely make out that they were a boy and girl pair about his age. Eru was shorter than average, while the two of them were relatively tall and thin. At a glance they didn't look younger than Eru but not much older either.

He couldn't make any headway with this silence, so Eru introduced himself.

"Evening, I am Ernesti, in the middle of a stroll. And you are?"

The two who were wary of this youth in black were stunned by the sudden introduction. Eru couldn't make out the delicate changes in facial expression, but from the reflection of the moonlight, he knew the young boy squinted eyes.

"I am Archid, this is my younger sister..."

"Adeltrud... Eh, we were watching the stars... that's right."

Eru looked at the ceiling window behind them; the couple probably came up from there. The sudden encounter surprised them, but it was simply a coincidence. Eru decided to continue jogging.

"I see, sorry to disturb you. I will take my leave..."

"Wa... wait, don't go yet. A stroll you say? On the roof top wearing this?"

"Don't you think that is strange?"

"Hm, that's true."

Eru could tell they were taken aback from their tone. Even Eru would have been suspicious if he was in their shoes.

"I said it was a stroll, but it is closer to being special training. That's why I chose a place that is difficult to run on."

"Eh... Do you really need to run on the roof? That's weird."

A simple matter to Eru was unthinkably strange to them. They looked at each other with skeptical faces and asked while tilting their heads.

"...Hmmm, forget it. That means we are interrupting your training."

"Please don't mind me. Well, I should be..."

"Hey hey, wait! You said this is special training, so you run around this place every day?"

Adeltrud stopped Eru who was ready to go. Eru stumbled a bit and replied "Yes" and took off again. The two of them followed Eru with their eyes as he disappeared into the shadows... His extraordinary speed surprised them as they watch Eru accelerate and leap off the edge of the roof. The large arc of his jump stunned them again.

"... Amazing, really amazing! What is that? That looks fun!"

"Wah, he is really running! Incredible, he flew off from the edge of the roof!?"

Archid and Adeltrud were excited after Eru left. They were stargazing out on the roof because of some unhappy events and had an amazing encounter. Their life changed drastically because of this encounter.

Eru, Archid, and Adeltrud met again the very next day at the same place. Unlike the encounter before, the two of them seemed to be waiting for Eru. Eru gave up any thoughts of avoiding them and greeted:

"Evening. Watching the stars again?"

"Yo. Nope, we are here to see you."

"Yup..."

The pair smiled happily, visible even under the faint starlight. Eru wasn't sure of their intentions, but decided to go along with them. He could just run away if things go awry and pick another running route in the future.

"Erm, do you have to cover your head?"

Archid pointed out. Eru thought it was rude too, so he removed his hood and sat on the roof like they did. "What is this about?" Eru pressed them. He noticed the two of them stiffened with awkward expressions on their faces.

"Eh, your names are Archid and Adeltrud right? What is it? Why the weird reaction ?"

"Eh? Oh, nothing. You... you are a girl!?"

"You move so fast, I thought you were a boy..."

Eru, whose image takes after his mother, had grown even more adorable with age and was now a 'pretty girl'. The silvery purple hair that reached just over his chin was cut to shoulder length, swaying in the wind. The dim moon light failed to hide his face. In fact, the faint light on his smooth skin gave his face a magical air. The pretty face didn't match the amazing movements they saw the day before, confusing the pair . Eru looked at the two children with slanted eyes and said:

"No, I look like my mother, but I really am a boy."

"... No, there is a limit to how much you take after your mother. Are you really a boy?"

"It's true; I have nothing to gain from a lie like this."

"Oh...How... how cute, Ernesti..."

Adeltrud drew closer with her hands for some reason, and Eru stepped back when he sensed the danger. Archid grabbed Adeltrud's collar and pulled her back immediately.

"Eh... Ah, my name is hard to articulate, just call me Eru."

"Ah, you can call me Chid."

"I will address you as Eru then! I am Ady!"



「俺はアーキッド。」

『キッド』な。

で、そっちが妹の」

「アデルトリート。」

『アデイ』って呼んで





After the round of introductions, Eru was wary of Ady who looked ready to pounce on him as he said:

"And so? What did you want to talk about?"

"Right, after you left yesterday, didn't you jump really high from the roof? How did you do that ?"

"Ah, that..."

"Also, please teach us the technique!"

Where did their wariness from yesterday go? Chid was chatting with him like they were old friends. Eru didn't understand why Chid was so excited.

"I can show you, but it will take a long time okay?"

"No worries. If we train with you, we can fly like you did one day right?"

"But you might be stuck at a bottleneck before that happens too..."

Eru warned and started to explain his training in simple terms... the content about magic. Chid and Ady were quite clever, picking up the difficult content at a good pace. Because they understood the content, they frowned at the task ahead.

"Isn't that grueling!"

"Eru is so amazing..."

"Didn't I tell you at the very beginning?"

The stunned duo groaned, then lifted their heads as if they had just thought of something.

"By the way, why is your magic so powerful?"

"... That is because of compatibility, and I have been training for some years."

"Some years... How old are you?"

"Eight."

"Eh!? That's the same as us!?"

Ady was impressed. Compared to the explanation earlier, this was more stunning. Chid and Ady seemed to be twins, both of them were eight years old just like Eru. Chid was in high spirits after hearing this, dismissing all of his worries. He had a face that said 'alright, we have to do this' and was fired up. Eru warned Chid who was rearing to go:

"Physical boost is a high spell; you can't use it without starting from the basics."

"Then just ask magic."

"...Hmm?"

"You are strong right? You know lots of high spells!"

"You might be cute, but you are also dependable!"

Eru's face began to cramp. This development was beyond his expectations and had nothing to do with cuteness. Their request was troubling; he wanted to escape if at all possible. But when he saw Chid and Ady talking enthusiastically about the training regime, his conscience could not allow him to ignore them.

"Ah... This.... Eh, I understand. I will... teach both of you magic..."

"Great, I knew you were a bro!"

"Wonderful, no wonder you are so cute!"

"You are overestimating me, and this has nothing to do with being cute!? Wait, like I said, magic cannot be learned immediately. You have to start from the basics, understand?"

"I know, I know, don't worry. We will catch up to you in a flash!"

He felt uneasy with Chid who accepted so readily, but Eru still confirmed the training details with them before they parted ways.

The following day, the twins visited Eru's home. Not at night but during the day.

Because they had only met under the moonlight until now, Eru finally saw their beautiful black hair and hazel eyes. The brunette twins reminded Eru of Japan, and he felt a sense of kinship with them. Chid's messy hair was short while Ady's slightly wavy hair reached her shoulders. They really were twins, having similar physiques and strong eyes.

"Welcome to my humble abode, please come in."

Eru gave up any resistance and ushered them in. The Echevarria residence was slightly bigger than their neighbours because of their relations with both the dean and an instructor of Laihiala pilot school. Chid and Ady looked around curiously as they followed Eru.

Eru's mother, Celestina, welcomed them warmly. Her son who seldom brought friends home had two guests with him at the same time. She was a great cook and showed off her prowess, making her guests feel at home with her snacks and beverages. Ady was really delighted, she hit it off well with Tina and was about to follow her into the kitchen to

make snacks but was dragged off forcefully by Chid .

After the disruption, they went into Eru's room to learn basic magic. Eru's room was very tidy. There was only a table, a bed, and several shelves along the wall. The shelves had textbooks related to magic, along with some storybooks for display. For preschool children, this room was too practical. The twins (Especially Ady) were planning to snoop around the room but were stopped by Eru.

After this episode, the magic lesson finally began. Eru used the magic textbook he liked the most as the teaching material, starting from the fundamentals. He thought that the pair were too confident and believed that because they were 8 years old, they would grow tired of it and give up immediately. But Chid and Ady were surprisingly passionate about their studies. When they started their architect sigil practical session, they displayed admirable control, hitting the bull's eye after a few attempts.

Eru remembered their dialogue yesterday. Did they understand the explanation about magic immediately? This means the twins are excellent. Eru reflected on underestimating them as he gave feedback to the duo that collapsed after depleting their mana.

"What you are feeling is mana depletion because your mana pool is too small. You should start by building up your mana capacity through training."

"Huff huff, this is tiring. So... How do we do this special training?"

"Deplete your mana every day. Your mana pool will grow faster than doing nothing. And it will be best to do some exercise, you can train your body and magic at the same time, it's more efficient that way."

"...Oh, that's why you are jogging on roof tops?"

"Yes. I told you it's not simple."

"That's right, but I still want to do it! I just need to keep this up every day! Isn't that 'simple'?"

Eru was surprised. He turned around to see Ady who had caught her breath with both hands on her hips, looking fearless. Her eyes were filled with determination and confidence and a hint of a smile showed on her face. He looked at Ady, thinking nonchalantly (She is tall and will become a beauty in the future, but she is hard to handle.)

"... I see, please work on your architect sigils for now. You will be able to do special training with me after your mana pool grows."

"I don't know when we can catch up to you... But it will definitely be sooner than you think!"

"Of course! Just watch us; we will reach your standard in no time!"

Eru's impression of his first 'good friends' was improving gradually.

(They are tougher than I thought. I made some pretty interesting friends.)

And so, Eru's training now included the twins Archid Olter and Adeltrud Olter. His life had gotten livelier .

Eru was not just learning magic. When he had spare time from his magical and physical training, he was also learning swordsmanship as promised by his father, Mathias. This was the standard swordsmanship from the curriculum of Laihiala pilot academy. Chid and Ady also joined in.

Of the three, Chid was the most talented in the sword. His build was great for his age, which allowed him to surpass Eru in no time. His stance was proper and would never lose to anyone in a simulation

battle.

They practiced the sword along with their magic. Compared to other children their age, the trio was incredibly busy. Eru did the necessary training in order to achieve his goal. He had gotten used to it after such a long time, so he didn't find it intolerable. He felt that he did not push himself hard enough in his previous life, which motivated him to strive on. Eru realized the biggest motivation for humans manifests from their desire.

But what about Chid and Ady? They harbour the same passion as Eru, living each day to the fullest. Eru's training already surpassed the normal standards; there was no need to burden normal children with this. If they were aiming to be a knight, there was no need to work so hard. But they never complained about it.

'What motivates the twins?' Eru couldn't think of any reason for them to work so hard .

Even with their busy schedule, they didn't only train. They made time to spend with their parents or play with other children around their age. With the largest academy in the nation, the children had plenty of playmates.

The kingdom of Fremmevira had a problem unique to it , which was the existence of the Demon beasts. The situation here was different from the region west of mount Aubigne, the kingdom of Fremmevira shared a border with the Bocuse forest ruled by the Demon beasts. Demon beasts often attack, threatening the lives and property of citizens causing the people to live in fear. Hence, the cities of Fremmevira had strong walls erected around them, protecting the towns and citizens.

-- Everyone in Fremmevira agreed to the construction of the walls, but the playful children found life within the walls to be dull and stifling. To

expend their energy, they treated the entire city as their playground, playing around noisily. The sound of the children's laughter could be heard on the streets every day.

It was no different this day, a group of kids dashed along the pavement. But on closer inspection, a child had fallen far behind.

"What are you doing... slow tortoise..."

When he heard the jeers of the children, the kid who had fallen behind stopped, panting, and waved his arms while protesting:

"Huff, huff.... It... It can't be helped! We dwarves can't run that fast!"

This protesting child was shorter than the rest; he had a strong and stout body along with short legs, a sturdy albeit slow build.

"Ah... Batson is slow..."

"What did you say? Damn...!"

"Slow Batson is angry! It will hurt if it gets you...! Run away...!"

The child named Batson was red from anger, running along with heavy steps, but he couldn't compensate for his short stride. The children dispersed with a laugh every time he drew near, leaving the lonesome Batson behind.

"...Ku, damn..."

He clenched his fists in frustration. He was helpless about this, being slow was a racial flaw of dwarves.

Dwarves... a race originating from the northern mountains.

They live among treacherous, snowy peaks, residing within caves. As



time went on, they started excavating deeper and became skilled miners . While refining and processing the rich minerals in the northern hills, the dwarves became experts with all sorts of mineral resources, advancing their skills in crafting with them. They were renowned as the 'crafting race'.

Because of their environment, the dwarves had evolved over time in order to move nimbly in narrow caves. Their short but stout stature was their most prominent physical trait. They were also covered in muscles, having double the arm strength of normal humans. They were rugged in appearance; the men had thick long hair and beards which start growing at the age of ten. By the way, their culture emphasizes on how spectacular their beard is and all men take pride in them.

But the isolated dwarves didn't spend their entire history hiding in the north. There were many dwarves who use their skills to set up smith shops all across the land .

The child mentioned just now... Batson Termonen was one of those dwarves. His parents had a smithy in Laihiala academy city, the reason why he was playing with the local children . The games of children revolved around chasing each other or hide and seek, especially so for a city surrounded by walls. Batson didn't know how tough it was to live in such an enclosed environment with his short stride . He was also mocked for his appearance by the kids in the neighbourhood.

The children making fun of Batson were long gone. Batson gave up, heading home in disgust.

"Weird. Are you alone? Where are the others?"

The fuming Batson heard someone talking to him and saw the trio when he turned his head. The one in the middle was especially short, like a valley between two mountains. It was the trio Ernesti, Archid,

and Adeltrud.

"It's Eru. You guys are probably looking down on me for being slow too."

The three of them were baffled by Batson's response but quickly understood the situation. The dwarves might be slow, but they were also strong and powerful. This means Batson would be incredibly strong in a fight. He wouldn't lose against multiple enemies if it came to a dogfight. Batson had an argument with someone and achieved overwhelming victory in the ensuing fight, which was the reason for the current situation.

As Eru watched Batson walk away, he felt like pulling some pranks and laughed mischievously:

"Ah, he was bullied again... Alright, let's go after those guys everyone."

The twins listened to Eru's suggestion and answered indifferently:

"I'm fine with that, but how? We are fine, but Batson can't keep up."

"Right, that's why we will bring him along. Just treat it as normal training with Batson as training weights."

"Oh! I get it!"

"Let's go, let's go!"

Chid and Ady understood what Eru was saying and stood on either side of Batson. They didn't consider how Batson felt and grabbed his arms.

"Eh? Hey... Hey! What are you..."

"Well, let's start our jogging exercise for the day!"

Chid and Ady started moving on Eru's command, ignoring the confused Batson. They treated Batson like cargo and carried him. This technique could only be used after learning 'limited physical boost', allowing them to use strength above their physical limit. Batson was stunned by their amazing speed, unable to resist.

"They must be at the central square! Let's attack!"

"Ora!"

"Yeah!"

"Like I said, what's happening...!?"

Laihiala academy city was roughly divided between the school campus and the urban zone. In the heart of the urban zone, there was an open space known as the central square to everyone. It was filled with stalls during the day and was the gathering point for all the children.

"Hey, will that guy catch up?"

"There is no way, he's too slow..."

"That's right; it will hurt like hell if you get hit by him!"

"Relax; just run away if he shows up. He is slow, you can get away easily."

It was the kids who made fun of Batson earlier. The group used some boxes as stools, biting into fruits they bought from some stall. They were gleeful from their successful revenge. Suddenly, they heard a loud scream from far away.

"Ahhhhh... Woah...!"

"Out of the way!"

"Where are you going! You guys better...!"

They noticed a familiar voice, which surprised them. Wasn't that Batson who was just jeered at by them? The one person they want to avoid? The group searched for the origin of the voice and saw Chid and Ady carrying Batson by the arms and approaching fast. They panicked and screamed:

"Woah, what... what are you...!?"

"Ah, found them. Now, Batson... launch!"

Eru pointed out the target while Chid and Ady threw Batson with a mischievous smile without slowing down. With a running start and a powerful throw, the short but heavy Batson flew through the sky. The group of children were slow to react, watching Batson as he arced through the air slack jawed. When they realized they were the landing point, the kids scrambled to get away in a panic.

"Eh! Wah, idiot, don't come here!"

"Woahhhh, quick... hide..."

But it was too late to run. They were hit directly by Batson's rock hard head, the force smashing the boxes into pieces. They fell all over the place under a cloud of dust. It was so chaotic that the masterminds, Eru and his friends, felt guilty as they looked at each other.

"...Did we... go too far?"

"Yeah... Right on target."

"Hey... I have an idea. I think we should get out of here."



"You three! Don't run!"

Batson shrugged off the broken boxes and stood up among the debris. As expected, the first to recover was the tough Batson, the rest of the children were still down. Batson was furious, sprinting towards the trio with a speed beyond any dwarves. The moronic three ran immediately.

"Goodbye, see you later !"

"Shut up, stay where you are!"

By the way, the kids left behind were caught by the adults and lectured for breaking the boxes.

Some distance away from the central square and residential area was a shopping mall. There was a building double the size of the surrounding ones. It emphasized sturdiness more than appearance. This was the smith shop 'Termonen workshop'.

Batson chased Eru and the others all over the streets and finally ended up here. Compared to Eru and company, Batson was on the verge of dying of exhaustion after the chase.

"You... You guys... are too fast..."

"Thanks to our daily training."

"Huff... how did you train to be so good..."

Eru smiled casually. In terms of stamina, Batson had the edge, but he couldn't match up to Eru and his magic.

"Ah... forget it, I don't care anymore."



Batson was exhausted and felt that all of this was just silly. He gave up and lay on the ground with his limbs spread out and finally caught his breath after a long while. He gave a contented smile and laughed softly.

"But it was fun smashing into them head on."

"Hey hey, we can do it again if you like it."

"No way."

After a short while, Batson stood up calmly and pointed to his house.

"Eh, alright. Want to visit my place? I'm thirsty."

Maybe it's because they were near the workshop, they could feel the heat even from outside. Batson's craftsmen parents were probably working there.

"Oh, I have never been to your place."

"Yeah... You will get hit if you disturb them. Don't be too rowdy."

The trio entered Batson's home and saw his father and a few craftsmen working in silence. Batson's father had a long beard and a wide body, it was easy to tell that he was a dwarf. His punches were no joke.

Opposite the work tables was the shop front with the finished merchandise on display. Batson explained about each one of them with pride.

"Look, all of these are made by my dad."

All sorts of metallic equipment could be seen, from swords, lances, shields and armour to woks and pots. As expected of a dwarf

craftsman, they were made delicately. Every one of them was a masterpiece made to the perfect size and colour.

"Woah... Your place is selling lots of stuff."

Eru browsed the merchandize curiously while Ady followed him. Chid grew excited when he saw the weapons such as swords and lances. Batson was extremely pleased when they praised his father's work.

"Hey Bat, do you craft things too?"

"Ah... my dad seldom lets me touch metals, but I can do carpentry. I am a dwarf after all; even my dad praises my work!"

After hearing Ady's whimsical query, Batson pointed to an item in the corner of the shop. There were some simple wooden household items there. They looked plain, but the workmanship was good and durable. Batson's skill was clear to see, and the trio was impressed. At this point, something in the corner attracted Eru's attention.

"Can you make 'magic staves'?"

"... Magic staves? I can make them if there are enough materials. I made these to earn some pocket change."

In order to use magic, humans have to use external 'crystal catalysts' to convert mana into physical phenomenon, and a magic staff is the most common example of that. Simply put, the crystal catalyst is attached to the end of the staff for ease of use.

Most staves are made from trees called 'white mist'. Because the wood from these trees is an excellent mana conductor, it is a popular magic ingredient. The plain staff crafted by Batson was also made from that.

"When practising magic, I always felt that..."

Eru's shifted his gaze to the staff on his waist. It was the magic item he had been using since the very beginning. It was shorter than most staves and fit well with his small stature.

"What is it? Something wrong with your staff?"

Eru twirled the short staff wand in his hand and smiled at the confused Batson:

"Don't you think a magic staff is unwieldy?"

Besides Batson, Chid and Ady were puzzled by Eru's comment. They had gotten used to using the staff as a tool to use magic and had no complaints. They didn't understand what he meant.

Eru thought it didn't feel right because of the memories of his previous life. Because he remembered the world where science was king, he felt that this was awkward and primitive. Strictly speaking, magic staves are items used to cast spells. Apart from 'strengthening' magic, human spells are usually 'shot', releasing powerful effects. Eru assumed that a magic staff was a type of 'projectile weapon'.

Eru recalled a scene from his past in Japan... a room filled with models. Among these collections, he owned an airsoft gun, a realistic looking 'Winchester M1894' rifle, which left a deep impression on him. Firearms, especially rifles, resemble magic staves. The correlation made him think there was a way to implement the shape of the rifle onto a magic staff.

"For example, the knights fight with a sword and staff in each hand..."

Even the knights, whose main weapons were swords, knew the importance of magic. Right handed knights hold the long sword with their dominant hand and the staff with the other hand. If a shield was equipped on the left hand, they would normally hold the staff behind

the shield.

"I think it is a hassle to hold them separately, that's why I have been thinking about combining them."

"I don't get it... But even if it can be done, how do you want to go about it?"

As he thought, Eru had a stroke of inspiration. Guns and swords... these two simple terms made him think about bayonets on rifles. It was simply attaching a knife to the tip of a gun barrel, using the rifle as a melee weapon. This concept was brought to this alternate world by Eru .

"Yeah, I just thought of an interesting idea."

Eru smiled gently, making Batson feel a chill run down his back.

Later, Eru returned home, sat in front of a table, and drew the design he had in mind. His focus surprised Chid and Ady who tagged along.

"What is that? What a weird staff."

That was the first thing Ady said after looking at the finished diagram. 'Bayonet'... a rifle that fires spells with a blade mounted upon it, the first 'magic staff' of its kind. For Ady who had only seen normal magic staves, it was very exotic.

The next day, Eru visited Batson's home again with the design in hand.

"Like I mentioned yesterday, can you make a staff like this?"

Batson was at a loss as he stared at the unexpected guest who had showed up with a design in hand after just one day. He decided to

look at the plan first and started confirming the details. Batson made a strange face.

"Eru, what... is this?"

"Winchester Rifle."

"What? I've never heard of a staff by that name, and the shape... is weird... Why is the bottom so wide? And what is with this protruding piece here?"

"Well, this is known as the stock..."

Some things couldn't be explained with just a design drawing. Eru answered Batson's queries and explained in detail.

"Eh, I will give it a shot."

Batson didn't really understand, but he took on the job anyway. He promised Eru he would craft this strange magic staff. Eru was relieved and felt that this was a good chance to see Batson's artisan work.

Several days later, Eru visited Batson's place for the third time on Batson's invitation. The unique weapon designed by him was presented in physical form.

The handle resembled the stock of a rifle, thick and slightly bent, but there were no triggers. A crystal catalyst was attached to the tip of the part where the sight of a gun should be. There were no chambers and magazines as it was not an actual gun. In place of the barrel was a short sword fixed in place. This was the bayonet designed in this alternate world... 'Gun staff'.

"The carpentry is done by me, my dad helped me with the metallic bits."

"Did he lecture you? If it was too much trouble, making all of it out of wood would have been fine too."

When Eru visited a few days ago, he heard that Batson's father was very busy. Eru did not want to press him and just asked Batson to do what he could.

"Eh, for some reason he was very interested when I was making it and gave me a hand."

Eru nodded in agreement. He thanked Batson and took 'that' in his hand hurriedly. He tried out the size, weight, and balance, the finished product was no different from the design. The dwarves were incredible, their skills truly astounding .

"Alright, I completed it as you asked... it turned out weirdly, what do you plan to do?"

"It will be quicker to show you."

Eru tried wielding the 'staff' and asked Batson for a place to test out magic. The two of them headed to the yard behind the smith shop where a few target boards meant to test out swords were erected. Eru aimed at one and slashed at it, casting an intermediate wind spell just before it hit... Sonic blade. He used the crystal catalyst on the staff to convert mana into physical form, emitting a shockwave from the blade and splitting the target cleanly in half. Eru took aim at the top half that was falling and cast an intermediate fire spell... fireball. It connected with the target and exploded, leaving a cloud of dust in its wake. The incredible performance of the staff made Eru smile, but Batson was stunned.

"How should I put this. This is too weird and out of this world ."

"Eh. Let's leave it at that. Batson, you did great! Seems that using magic in the future will be interesting!"

"Eh, as long as you are happy."

"By the way, can you make another one for me?"

"Don't be so shameless with your request."

Eru received the second bayonet staff that he wanted. These two bayonet staves officially named 'Winchester' were kept in a specially made sheath worn around his waist. Eru kept them with him at all times.

The completion of the gun staff, which was suitable for close quarters fighting and ranged combat, was the key to enhancing his mobility and firepower, influencing his fighting style greatly.

## **Knight's & Magic Vol 1 Chapter 3**

One day, Ernesti sat with his arms crossed in the living room at home, thinking with a serious face. The reason was the letter spread on the table before him with 'Laihiala pilot academy student prospectus' written at the top. At the age of 8.5 years, he finally received an offer to attend Laihiala pilot academy.

Eru's family resided in Laihiala academy city, named after the best education facility in Fremmevira, Laihiala pilot academy. The education system was divided into three stages, primary school from age 9, middle school from age 12, and high school from age 15, taking three years for each stage. Most students only complete the first six years of school because high school was similar to college on earth, intended for students who seek further specialized education. It was customary to recognize all those above the age of 15 as adults. Most people started their career around the age of 18, but depending upon the circumstances, some may join the workforce at 15.

Even though Laihiala academy had the term 'pilot' in its name, not everyone enrolling had the goal of being a knight or a knight runner. One reason was the sponsorship from the kingdom for primary and middle school education, so children from all social standings studied there. Fremmevira's education system differed from modern compulsory education, a result of the special circumstances of the nation.

Fremmevira was known as the 'kingdom of knights'. Its name sounded great, but it actually meant that 'battles' occurred frequently. There was a large number of demon beasts lurking on the outskirts of the nation where the majority of the citizens were defenseless farmers working on the vast fields, making them vulnerable to attacks. The threat had always been there. In order to secure a steady supply of tax and food, protection of the farmers became an important policy



of the nation, but Fremmevira did not plan to eradicate all of the demon beasts because they appeared to be infinite.

The knights existed to protect the citizens, but there were lapses in their defence due to the large area under their protection. The knights were usually deployed after the discovery of a demon beast, which was a passive strategy. This meant the citizens would be under threat before the knights moved in to intercept. With this historical background, at some point the farmers hoped to possess skills to protect themselves, which was fulfilled by the nation in short order by setting up a ministry and related facilities to teach them the minimum combat techniques and magic knowledge needed for defence. In the end, Fremmevira was not a peaceful nation; even the farmers needed to pick up weapons to defend themselves.

There was opposition among the aristocrats ruling the country on educating the lowly farmers to fight, but the policy remained in place to keep the nation running. Based on the end results, the policy was a success. By pushing for a minimum standard of education among all people, it unified the citizens and their concept of pride as a nation. The improvement in domestic security was also a lucky bonus.

With this back-story, a trend of setting up education facilities was started all over the country. Laihiala pilot academy took advantage of its geographic location near the capital and enrolled students who were peasants, merchants, and even nobles. The academy was thus divided into an agricultural faculty, a business faculty, a pilot faculty, etc. All majors included classes on combat techniques, but most of the curriculum was tailored to make the students employable. The school holds many different classes to accommodate the family circumstances of its students as well. Students need to attend at least 3 years of class and achieve a certain level of skill proficiency to graduate.

Chid and Ady sat beside Eru who was studying the prospectus

seriously. They had already flipped through the prospectus and were eating the snacks on the table. When the snacks were almost gone, Eru was still deep in thought, which surprised them.

"Hey, what's troubling you? You wanted to be a knight correct? Just take the knighthood major."

"Erm, that was my plan... But there is something bothering me."

"Bothering you? Is it something like 'the knighthood major is too easy'?"

"No, that's not it... My goal from the very beginning was to be a knight runner."

Knights certified to ride on Silhouette Knights are known as knight runners. Eru's family knew about his ambition, and Chid and Ady had heard about it several times, too.

"The number of Silhouette Knights is limited, and only the elites of knighthood major can become pilots. The knighthood major will take 6 years to complete and is followed by the piloting course. When all of that is done including the deployment process... It will be a long time before I am actually riding a Silhouette Knight."

It is not easy to become a knight runner; Silhouette Knights are 'weapons', something created to protect the nation. That's why it requires years of training before it is possible to pilot one.

Eru thought about it for a while and faced Mathias.

"Father, I have a question, does the knighthood major allow the skipping of grades?"

Mathias frowned, his son had asked something difficult. He understood Eru's worries and also knew how tough it would be.

"With the efforts you put in and your magical capabilities, that is certainly possible... but the knighthood major is different. Not only are you tested on your sword and magic powers, you will also go through ethics lessons, and you have never learned about ethics officially correct?"

This was a blind spot. Mathias continued with a troubled expression:

"Silhouette knight pilot training is the final class before you enter pilot school. Students usually enroll at age 15... But for you... eh, if you are not tall enough, there won't be a suitable machine for you to pilot."

Everyone looked at Eru, and the scene fell into a hellish silence. Eru was smaller than the peers in his age group, which was obvious compared to the Olter siblings beside him. But no one thought this part would be important.

Eru looked down in utter disappointment. He would need to wait 7 more years to pilot the giant robots of his dreams. He didn't mind waiting, but no one would blame him for thinking the process was taking too long. But not everything will go your way. Eru wanted to change the mood in the room when he felt a shadow loom over him. He lifted his head and saw Tina standing before him.

"I'm sorry Eru. Because you look like me... your height..."

Seeing his mother rubbing his head with an apologetic face, Eru opened his eyes wide and shook his head.

"That's not it! Mother, it doesn't matter! I am still young, and this is not the only way..."

Eru stopped suddenly as he remembered something, surprised by his own words and closed his mouth slowly. This inspiration gave birth to

a new possibility.

"...That's right; this is not the only way. I was too focused on piloting and wasted too much time. I should be spending my efforts in the right place..."

Tina tilted her head in confusion as she watched Eru slowly raise his head with resolve.

"I can just make one myself."

"Make what?"

Chid asked in reflex when he heard Eru's fragmented words.

"A Silhouette Knight. I will make one myself."

"... Ah?"

"...E...Eru? Are you serious?"

Eru looked more determined than ever. His words were too surprising; everyone in the room didn't know what to say.

"Wait... Wait a minute, what do you mean... by making?"

"I mean literally. All my actions thus far are based on piloting, but now that I think about it, I won't get my personal machine this way."

Everyone was stunned, was Eru thinking of hogging a Silhouette Knight for himself? Aside from a handful of powerful nobles and merchants, no one owned a personal Silhouette Knight. Creating and maintaining one would require enormous funds and manpower, going the pilot route is a short cut compared to this. But that is the common sense of this world, but for the robot nerd from an alternate world, Eru didn't care about all that.

"That's right isn't it? The machine issued by the kingdom cannot be modified too drastically! Why didn't I think about something so basic? a custom Silhouette Knight is the way to go. I will need related knowledge to modify one completely anyway... I overlooked this."

Chid and Ady put their hands on their foreheads when they saw Eru's evil smile, they knew that this was bad. The normal Eru always acted maturely with a casual air. But he had an unbelievably passionate side to him too, erupting unexpectedly. Chid and Ady felt that they were looking at Eru's true obsessive nature.

"You're doing it for real? Eru..."

"Yes! I am sure that I will be wasting my time if I carry on this way. Setting the goal of building one myself will be a good hobby and is more practical than saving money and buying one right?"

Chid thought either choice would be crazy, but he chose silence intelligently. Mathias glanced at the uninterested Chid and said sternly:

"Eru... I understand how you feel, but it is not as simple as you think."

"I know, father. But if possible, I want a personal Silhouette Knight, so I am going to do all that I can."

"I see... alright then. But work hard on your knight lessons, too."

"I will. I really want to be a pilot, so I won't take it lightly."

Eru had no hesitation on his face. Ady started patting Eru's head for some reason, moving from being stunned to being impressed.

"Well, you are really willing to do whatever it takes for your goal."

"... I am a bit concerned with the way you put it, but there is no reason to give up when there are options for me to take."

"Amazing. Eru looks so cute but is so passionate."

(Because of how I look, normal methods won't work on me.)

Eru looked out the window; he could see the facility that took up half the space in the city... Laihiala pilot academy.

"Well... I am looking forward to the day I go to school in Laihiala."

Mathias and Tina smiled at each other; they didn't want to see their son depressed. Even though his goal was ridiculous, if it is Eru, he can definitely strive towards it wholeheartedly.

"... I don't want to lose, Eru is too amazing."

"Chid?"

"Noth... Nothing. Okay, let's work hard to be knights!"

"Yeah!"

Chid and Ady had decided to major in knighthood, too. The three of them wanted to work hard on their goal together at Laihiala pilot Academy and looked forward to their campus life in the future.

== C.E. 1274

The season changed to spring, the time for Laihiala pilot academy to welcome new students.

Laihiala pilot academy didn't only take in students from Laihiala city

but also from the capital, the neighbouring city, and all over the nation. Taking into account the possibility of a demon beast attack and traffic conditions, most of the students leave for academy city early, so new faces could be seen around the dormitory in recent days.

On the morning of the entrance ceremony, Ernesti, Archid, and Adeltrud walked to campus along with Batson. With the dormitory filled with students from foreign countries, local students usually commuted to school from home.

Laihiala academy city was surrounded by a giant city wall, but Laihiala pilot academy had a wall of its own. Although its purpose was to demarcate the campus grounds, with the vast amount of land that makes up the academy, the continuous line of walls extended to the streets, becoming a well-known landmark.

"Now that I think about it, I have gotten used to the wall but have never gone in..."

"You can go in as much as you like from now on."

"That's right."

The group walked along the wall and reached the tall school gate shortly. This was the main entrance into the academy. Because the piloting students will ride on Silhouette Knights, the gate was adjusted to accommodate their height. The door was wide open for the entrance ceremony.

The four of them were about to enter excitedly when Eru suddenly stopped. Chid, Ady, and Batson looked back with surprise, but understood when they saw the things beside the gate. On either side of the main gate were Silhouette Knights, welcoming all of the visitors and incoming students. The group had to drag Eru, who looked like he was about to prostrate himself before them, away and

entered the academy.

The most important part of the schedule was the entrance ceremony. The ceremony mostly consisted of listening to speeches given by the teachers. After lunch, the teachers would lead their students away and give them a brief introduction to the content of the course. Although they were divided into various faculties, primary school focused more on the basics with common modules across the whole school year. The division was very vague, and the contents only start to vary during middle school.

The entrance ceremony was held in the grand hall. The group gazed in awe at the gigantic scale of the campus, but Eru, who had visited his father's workplace before, knew the way and walked confidently towards the grand hall while the other three desperately chased after him to keep the short Eru in sight.

"It's great that we don't need others to lead us, but it is easy to lose track of Eru. He is really small."

"Right, it would be easier to locate him if he was taller, but that's fine. He is cuter this way!"

"I didn't grow much either."

Eru couldn't stand their noise and spoke up.

"I'm going to leave Chid and Ady behind."

"Ah, I have an idea! We won't lose Eru if I hug him right?"

"I'm not okay with that."

As the group joked around, the grand hall was already overflowing with people when they arrived. Everyone here was a new student, as expected of the largest education institute in the nation. They



thought it would be too crowded to even stand in the grand hall, but they somehow found some space. The school had already anticipated this overwhelming crowd.

The ceremony began in the grand hall filled with tense freshmen.

Grandfather of Ernesti... Dean Lauri Echevarria started off the address, followed by esteemed members of the academy. The four children who listened to the speech with their backs straight started to feel irritated as the event droned on. Although they displayed patience uncommon for children, they still had bored faces by the end of the ceremony. Fortunately, the torment stopped before noon. With the end of the speeches, the entrance ceremony drew to a close, and the freshmen filed out of the grand hall.

It was lunch time, so the group headed for the school canteen. Some people bought food there; others took out their lunch boxes. Upperclassmen who were familiar with the place headed to the eateries outside the campus. Everyone settled down to eat their lunch in their own way, but the cafeteria remained crowded. In this chaos, a prominent group sat in a corner of the canteen.

One of them was a pretty girl who had short silvery hair with a hint of purple.

The other two had unkempt black hair and wavy shoulder-length black hair, a boy and girl who shared a similar feeling.

The last was a young dwarf who had reddish brown hair.

From afar, the members of this group had nothing in common. Even though the group drew many curious glances, no one had the courage to approach them.

"The canteen is incredibly crowded."

"But we found a place to sit immediately, which is great."

"They offered their seats to us immediately... I wonder why?"

Eru chatted with Batson as he ate his crepe covered in pie crust. It was a mini crepe in pie crust that was easy to carry and fit nicely into Eru's small hand. Ady looked very pleased as she watched Eru eat the biscuit in silence.

"Are there speeches in the afternoon? They are too long winded."

"Doesn't matter, you don't listen to them anyway Chid. Didn't you fall asleep?"

"Let's eat our lunch first. There are lots of people here, so we should finish up and let others sit too."

There were empty seats at their table. Eru felt embarrassed that no one else was sitting with them. At this moment, a female student ignored all of that and walked towards them.

Her blonde hair swayed as she walked in confident strides, causing a small commotion among the students. It was rare for her to show up here after all. She sat in the empty chair as if they were planning to meet up.

She was obviously older than Eru and the others, an upperclassman. There was no standard uniform in Laihiala pilot academy. Her clothes seemed to be low profile but well made, with accessories that didn't hinder her movements. Eru guessed she must come from a well off family, either a daughter of wealthy merchants or aristocrats.

There were two types of reaction from them: Eru and Batson looked at the stranger with confusion, while Chid and Ady held their breath and stared at her. Those were not passionate eyes for a beautiful

lady, but bashful eyes. Eru didn't understand this, but he was certain the girl had connections with the twins.

The pretty girl who came uninvited smiled as she looked at the tense twins, then faced Eru and Batson. Her smile became gentler as she introduced herself.

"Hello my cute friend. My name is Stefania Serrati. What about you?"

Eru was lost for a moment, but he put down his half bitten biscuit, sat properly and replied:

"I am Ernesti Echevarria, this is Batson Termonen, as for these two..."

"It's fine, I'm already acquainted with them. Archid, Adeltrud, long time no see, I'm glad you are both healthy."

Stephanie had been smiling gently the entire time, but Chid tensed up his normally sleepy face and said:

"Long time no see, Stefania onee-sama."

The stiff tone didn't sound like something Chid would normally use. Stefania's face collapsed, but she regained her smile immediately.

"... Both of you are at the age to be schooling in Laihiala. Since we have the opportunity to study in the same school, why don't you visit me?"

"Stefania onee-sama is in the third year of primary school isn't it? Oh yah, Baltsar onii-sama is studying here too?"

"Right, he is majoring in knighthood, 2nd year of primary school, you will have the chance to meet him soon."

Compared to Stefania's attitude, the demeanour of the twins was weird. Chid was stiff in his tone while Ady was uncharacteristically quiet. It seemed like they had family ties, but it felt unnatural. Batson routinely switched his gaze from one member to the next in this awkward atmosphere. Everyone had stopped eating. Suddenly, Eru finished his biscuit aggressively, contrary to his small stature. He ignored the surprised stares of others, wiped his mouth and smiled.

"Alright, we have finished our food. The cafeteria is too cramped, and it's not considerate to hog the table, let's go somewhere else. What do you think?"

"... Ri... Right. Both of you are majoring in knighthood? There will be plenty of chances for us to meet, let's chat slowly next time."

Stefania, who had regrettable expression, patted Eru's head for some reason before leaving. The four baffled children were left behind. Batson wanted to clarify things, but Eru said that lunch break was over, and they should head for the classroom. He forcefully left his seat and left. Batson wasn't satisfied, but he still went towards the crafting faculty, while the trio moved towards the knighthood department in an awkward atmosphere.

There was nothing worth mentioning about the afternoon freshmen welcome activities. They were simply briefed on the schedule for the future and the contents for lessons tomorrow. After orientation, everyone was dismissed, and the students prepared to leave.

Even now, Chid and Ady still seemed troubled. They were not joking like usual, instead they were unfocused and had an awkward air about them. On the way home, Eru led the way and told them:

"I don't know the details, but don't be depressed. Class is starting tomorrow, so training is cancelled for today, take a break."

Chid and Ady stopped. "Eh, Eru." Chid called out with a calm resolve.

"What is it?"

"Aren't you going to ask, erm, about her?"

"If you feel the need to share, I will listen."

The air about the twins visibly eased. They looked at each other as if to confirm something. After a while, Chid started:

"Eru, we have something to tell you."

"Alright, let's go to my room."

And so, the trio left campus and headed for Eru's place to his room. As this is the place where they hold their magic lessons, the two were familiar with it. They sat on the table and bed as usual, but the difference was that they were keeping quiet. After waiting for a while, Chid began:

"Ah... Erm, simply put, our father is an impressive noble."

After being silent for so long, these words were too direct. Eru blinked and asked:

"So you are aristocrats? But you two have not done anything noble like? And even joined me for training."

"It's complicated... actually not. Our mother is not the noble's wife but a mistress."

"Eh, because mother is laid back, she says she don't mind being a mistress since she has us."

"Father's wife... well, is very jealous and conscious of others."

"Even if she don't like mother, her pride prevents her from feuding with a simple mistress."

Even Eru wasn't sure how to react, so he simply nodded.

"Mother is too obedient, doing everything to appease others. In the end madam doesn't allow us to live under the same roof as her, making a big scene."

"And we were given a place to live, that's why we moved here. The living expenses are handled by father."

"Eh, that's how it is... Stefania Onee-sama you met earlier is the daughter of madam."

"Tiffa-nee is alright, but the problem is with the other two brothers. The younger brother is very irritating."

"He likes to go on a power trip, bullying us because we are scions of a mistress. Just like Madam."

The two of them complained nonstop and ended with a big sigh. Their expression twisted when they mentioned the brothers, making it easy to imagine all of the things that happened between them.

"This brother you mentioned is in Laihiala?"

"Correct. He is one year older than us, so he is in the second year of primary school."

"I see. I have a feeling that there will be trouble."

Chid nodded strongly. It's not a premonition; Chid knew that trouble would definitely come. The life in the main house flashed in his mind. He had to bear with oppression and hardship back then, so he

didn't spend too much time reminiscing.

"We are still grateful to father for providing funding for us. But..."

"If they leave us alone, we won't trouble them too. But they like to mess with us and can't stand us."

They probably recalled unpleasant memories, Chid was gesturing furiously while Ady said moodily.

"Since Tiffa-nee knows... That guy will probably come soon. If you are with us, you might get caught up in this too..."

Ady was depressed when she said this. Her usual confidence had disappeared. Because she usually gave off a bubbly impression, the gap appeared wider.

"I understand the gist of it. So what's next?"

Eru was standing before they had realized it.

"... What do you... mean by next?"

"Do you plan to defend, ignore them, or attack?"

"Oh, should be attack... Hey!"

Chid unconsciously went along and was shocked. Eru smiled as he usually does when he is talking about dangerous things. Even Chid who knew that Eru was not just a pretty face backed off.

"What is with you all of a sudden? I am glad you are my friend, you would be terrifying as an enemy."

"You are helping us? As expected of Eru! You are so reliable, but this is our family problem. We can't trouble you."

"That's right. I have no idea how much I can interfere, but I don't plan to see my friends so troubled. Just call me whenever you need, I will be there."

"... Okay, we're counting on you!"

Chid and Ady nodded strongly, they were smiling once again. Eru looked at them and thought:

(I didn't expect them to be nobles. Their sister didn't seem to hate them... why is that? No matter what, it seems there will be trouble...)

Eru thought about it from an outsider's point of view, keeping this matter to heart. The upcoming school days will be more chaotic than he imagined.

After the tumultuous entrance ceremony, they started their school life the next day.

There were no scheduled lessons today too because the briefing took up half the day. This was extremely boring for the 9 year old kids who just enrolled. Most people paid no heed to the teacher's presentation, and the atmosphere was clearly screaming 'won't it end already' for all to see. But one student was excited about a few trivial details.

(There... There is such a course...)

That's right, this was Ernesti Echevarria. And the matter that gave him such a big impact? It was the flimsy piece of paper in his hands. A table was drawn neatly on it, the timetable for all classes, probably basic information given out by the school to all freshmen. What did he learn from the timetable?



(...There is a... 'Silhouette Knight Design basics' course...!?) But the timetable he was holding with his trembling hands did not belong to the knighthood major for primary school. You can infer from the name that this course is meant for knightsmith students who are aiming to build and maintain Silhouette Knights. It is catered for students in their 2nd year of middle school (around 13 years old), and this course had nothing to do with Eru who was majoring in knighthood.

But after reading such tempting words, the out of control speeding train... Ernesti will definitely go for it. He confirmed the knight faculty time table, and in the same time slot was one of the most important courses for knighthood majors... fundamental magic.

(I must attend this course no matter what... this class is in the way...!)

Suddenly, the teacher on the lectern felt a strange sensation, as if a starving beast had made its way into the classroom, sending a prickling sensation down his back. He shivered, stopped his lecture and looked around the room, but he could only see a bunch of unmotivated kids, there was no famished beast here. The teacher shook his head and decided to treat it as a false alarm.

He overlooked the fired up petite student hidden in the crowd.

The knighthood courses that they are studying have two types of courses, fundamental knight courses and generic courses. The generic courses are the same as other majors, while the knight courses focus on magic knowledge, mana training, and swordsmanship.

Generally speaking, human magic is classified into elementary, intermediate, and advanced according to its power and ease of control.

As most citizens know elementary magic, they are also known as 'common spells'. Hence, middle and high spells are recognized as real magic. Faculties aside from knighthood majors strive to be at the intermediate level. Since advanced magic was also dependent on the depth of one's mana pool, only knighthood majors learn it. Ernesti knew through experience that increasing mana pool requires plenty of effort. Hence, joining combat related careers such as knights require lots of effort in mana training. Allocating more time on mana training than other courses is the unique feature of knighthood faculty.

And so, the day to attend Fundamental Magic class arrived.

This was a memorable first lesson. The lesson was not conducted in the classroom as the students needed to be tested to determine their magical abilities and divided into different groups.

Eru's trio had already learned magic before enrollment, so their foundations were strong. Apart from them, there were some who had learned the basics too, so they would be in a different class from those without any magical training. The newbies were placed in 'general class' while the experienced ones went to "advanced class'. Advanced class might sound impressive, but the only difference with general class is the experience. Regardless, advanced class students were viewed as elites anyway.

This was because the advanced class had kids from noble clans and merchant families, able to receive education in sword and magic before enrollment. This meant they had a certain standard of wealth. In a way, Ernesti, with his family background in the education field, and his disciples, Archid and Adeltrud, were exceptions.

The chattering express students followed the teacher to the sports

arena. The fastest method to test magic capabilities was for the students to use them, and to cast destructive spells, they needed to move to a specialized training ground surrounded by walls. The classmates gathered in groups of 2 or 3, surveying the straw man targets wearing old armour, rearing to go.

On the surface, this was just an introductory class. They wouldn't be scrutinized because of their magic abilities at this stage, but it was a chance to show off and garner fame if they perform better than their peers. A lot of the advanced class students had confidence in their abilities. Everyone was in high spirits and did their best because of this.

One of the students cast a fireball, an intermediate level fire spell. An orange magical sphere appeared from the staff, hitting the target with blazes trailing behind it. True to its name, the magic exploded in a ball of flames upon impact <TL:Kanji is Explode Fire Ball>. The armour retained its shape but was scorched black, showing the explosive power of the blast. The students were in an uproar after witnessing this scene, very few freshmen knew intermediate spells before starting school and have mastery over the powerful fireball. But fireball was an impressive spell and drains lots of mana, the boy was already at his limits after casting it. He was panting unevenly, almost to the point of mana exhaustion, but he still looked very pleased.

The teacher supervising the exercise held high hopes for this batch. With such mastery of magic upon enrollment, he would become an elite magician if he puts in the effort in school. The teacher tried not to display this thought on his face, continuing to record the results in silence.

"Everyone seems used to fireball, should we do something like that too?"

"Right... Ah, Eru, what do you want to do?"

Archid folded his arms lazily, standing some distance from the area that was filled with excitement. Adeltrud hugged Eru as usual as she conversed with him. She realized Eru was not being himself. Eru always gave off a gentle air, now he had a stern expression as if he was going to a battlefield. Ady tilted her head in confusion, her past experience tells her that Eru will only make such a serious face when Silhouette Knights are involved, but she had no idea how that is related to the magic test that is going on right now.

The test continued. Next up was finally Eru. His stature was petite when compared to his classmates, but his expression was stern like never before, and he had a serious atmosphere about him. Eru spoke when he got into position.

"Teacher, I have a selfish request."

"Hmm? What is it?"

The sudden question surprised the teacher.

"If the result of the test exceeds the contents of the class by a large margin, can I be exempted from this course?"

"... What are you talking about?"

Eru's strange words stunned the teacher. He frowned deeply when he realized what Eru meant.

"...Ernesti Echevarria? What do you mean? Refusing to attend lessons? This joke is not funny..."

"No, I am very serious. I have another class that I wish to attend, so it will be a big help if I am exempt from this course."

The teacher was dumbstruck. He had been a teacher for quite some

time, but he had never seen a student so overconfident before. It might be okay for a middle schooler, but a freshman in primary school? The teacher wouldn't allow this request easily.

"How daring of you, I won't accept it so easily. Ah, right, since you said that, at least show me advanced magic. Then I will think about it."

"So it will be dependent on my results? I heard that very clearly..."

The students around them listened to the conversation and anticipated a good show. Most of them just wanted to watch the drama, only Chid and Ady knew Eru's strength and the inevitable result and looked at each other.

The teacher was also hinting that punishment will follow if Eru failed and deliberately made things difficult for Eru. But the teacher did not realize that he was facing a demon who wanted to give his whole life for Silhouette Knight designing; Eru would give his all without hesitation.

Eru started to construct magical script in the virtual region in his brain... the magius circuit. He pushed his amazing calculation abilities, starting his processing sequence. He drew out Winchester from his waist, casting spells along the wake of his staff... Piercing Lance. This was a type of compressed fire spell, focusing the explosion on impact in one direction, increasing the piercing power of fireball. And he did not activate just one, there were ten Piercing Lances appearing one after another in the air.

After completing the deployment of the Piercing Lances in short order, he took aim at the target, firing them off simultaneously. The long and thin flaming spears were right on target, and the armoured target was hit repeatedly. The narrow interior of the armour was heated intensely after being pierced on impact, the straw man instantly torn apart. The armour could not withstand the devastation

and melted in a red glow before finally exploding.



エルは瞬きするほどの間に徹甲炎槍の配置を終えると、  
直後に標的に向けて一斉に撃ち放った。

ピアシングランス



The teacher and students were speechless, unable to believe their eyes. Piercing Lance was an intermediate spell but was higher level than fireball. Constructing the script in such a short time and activating 10 of them was not a simple task. And amazingly, Eru didn't seem fatigued after casting such a powerful spell. This means that the mana cost of the Piercing Lances were not a burden for Eru's mana pool. This was not something a freshmen who just enrolled yesterday should be able to achieve.

This was more than enough, but Eru kept his word. He lifted his other Winchester... different from the one he used to cast Piercing Lance. The next script had been completed in his mind, a complicated and orderly spell, conjuring a magic much stronger than Piercing Lance.

The air around them started to shift, forming a tornado in an instant. It went straight for the target from Eru's position with a large howl. The strong wind would definitely have blown the straw men away if they hadn't been nailed to the ground. The furious wind and rumbles of thunder resonated within everyone's ears. The lightning created by magic was much more destructive than the Piercing Lances, turning the armour into dust with one strike.

Thundering Gale... A melded magic using wind and lightning sigils, a real Advanced Spell.

Eru started training from age 5, so casting this series of spells, including high spells, was not a burden for him, and he was not even out of breath. When he looked back, he saw a startled expression. The teacher was slack-jawed and stiff. Eru smiled happily and said to the teacher:

"How was that teacher? Do you agree to exempt me from this class?"

"...Eh? Ah, yes, do what you want."



No one protested or challenged this decision. And so, Eru earned the freedom to work towards a bright future.

Everyone stared from afar at the pleased Eru who gained victory with his overwhelming abilities. Even Chid and Ady looked at the target that was blown away with blank eyes.

"He made such a big scene, he was totally into it."

"Yeah, he can skip this class and attend the Silhouette design module of his dreams!"

"He was willing to go this far... Anyone who gets in his way will be burnt to ashes..."

Ady said as she backed away. Chid pulled her back with a bitter smile.

"That's wrong. He is not taking it easy because he has a goal, right? I will blow the target away too."

Chid rotated his shoulders gleefully and with anticipation. Eru gave him a warning despite what he did:

"Don't mind me, but is it okay for you to stand out? You have an irritating brother here right? Do you plan to challenge him?"

"What are you saying after causing such a stir? Like I said, we will stand out with you around anyway."

"I think ... you are spot on, I can't deny that."

"Right? I will be right back."

"Take care... Work hard!"

The training ground hadn't recovered yet from the disaster caused by Eru, everyone looked at Chid with sympathetic eyes when he stepped onto the field without a care in the world. No one wanted to be next, right after Eru's unbelievable magic display. Chid knew this, but still entered with his head held high.

(My tutor is amazing. It will be hard to catch up to him. I have to put on a good show too!)

For Chid who studied under Eru, he was used to Eru's shenanigans and knew he couldn't match Eru yet. That was why he couldn't hold back anything.

Chid steadied himself, closed his eyes, and started to construct a script with his magius circuit. To be honest, he was more proficient in power type spells, so he chose to use one. He drew up the staff he favoured and held it high, then pointed it at the target. The mana and script streaming into the crystal catalyst made the red orb glow brightly. He chose to cast a single shot spell, a middle spell more powerful than piercing lance... Flame Strike.

An oval shaped magic sphere flew out with a spectacular trailing blaze, causing a bigger explosion than fireball. The reverberating sound acted like a signal, drawing the attention of everyone present back to the arena.

"... Wahhh!"

Chid fired a second shot, the two overlapping explosions blew the targets away. For him, two shots were the limit of his mana pool. He was unsteady on his feet from fatigue, but he still smiled and passed the baton to the next person... Ady.

"You are still the same, only going for brute force... My turn!"

Chid and Ady were twins, but their strengths differed widely. Unlike

Chid who was good in power, Ady specialized in intrinsic control. She carefully constructed her script, held her magic staff with both hands and aimed at the target. A dazzling lightning appeared the next second, piercing the target with the rumble of thunder. She chose the middle spell of the lightning architect sigil... Riot Sparrow.

As depicted with its name <TL: Kanji is Lightning Javelin>, Riot Sparrow changed lightning into the form of a javelin before firing it at the target. Lightning spells are powerful, but it was hard for the caster to direct it accurately. Increasing the accuracy adds additional burden on the caster, along with its difficult control making people view it as a higher class of magic compared to others. From the aftermath, the trio displayed incredible capability.

They ignored the atmosphere in the arena, high fiving each other in celebration. Ady hugged Eru and twirled around while Chid was so tired he couldn't stand up straight. Compared to the casual trio, the other advanced students felt uneasy. They were thinking:

(What are we going to do if we take classes with these three incredible people?)

As priorly mentioned, the express class had many scions of aristocrats and merchants, a bunch of children with large amounts of pride. Their childishness and immature pride angers others easily, but the scene before them was too amazing, shattering their young pride and competitiveness. They gave up and sighed deeply. Eru and the twins didn't care about their depressed school mates. Their school mates' troubles were just beginning.

That fundamental magic class was seen as a catastrophe. A few days later, Batson led his petite childhood friend and repeated for the one hundredth and first time.

"Ah... it's that way, that's the classroom you want... But, are you

really going to study there?"

Laihiala pilot academy had many grades and faculties, so it needed plenty of classrooms and facilities. Because the campus was divided by grades and faculties, a lot of students would only meet others in the canteen during breaks.

"Of course, how can I miss such an interesting class? Ah, here will be far enough, Batson."

"Yeah..."

Batson watched the youth enter the classroom and remained baffled.

"But this is the crafting faculty, and that is a middle school classroom..."

The atmosphere before class began was casual, some were preparing for the next lesson, some were working on their assignments, and others were just chatting lazily.

"Quiet please, class is beginning... It seems very quiet today."

The teacher said the usual when he entered the room, but he noticed that something was wrong and stopped. The students were usually noisy and rowdy before class started. To be craftsmen requires a practical attitude. In other words, it is better to try it out instead of thinking about it. There was nothing wrong with this line of thought, but that meant a lot of them just couldn't sit still.

For these students, this lecture based class was unpopular. It was rare for his charges to be quiet before the teacher enters. He might have felt moved, but instead he felt that something was out of place. The 40 odd years old teacher surveyed the students in the room and noticed that they were staring at the same spot. He

followed their sights and saw the culprit for this abnormal situation.

"... What are you doing here?"

The teacher asked the student sitting in the middle of the front row who did not belong here.

This was a young and small sized boy, nothing like a middle schooler. Because the middle school desk was too large for him, he had to kneel on his chair. His position was upright and proper, with the text book 'Fundamentals of Silhouette Knights design' on his lap, waiting excitedly for the class to begin.

This scene was warming but contrasted with the situation in reality. This was a classroom in middle school, not a place for primary school students.

"I'm here for the lesson."

"I see, because the class is about to begin. But that's not what I meant. You don't look like a middle schooler."

"I am a primary school student from the knighthood faculty. I came because I want to attend this course."

Their conversation was going in circles, but the teacher was steady in behaviour, warning Eru calmly.

"Well, it is good to be passionate about your studies, but there are classes for knighthood majors right? You should come after finishing that class."

"It's okay. I knew all the contents of that class. The teachers are fine with exempting me. You can confirm this with them."

"... Is that so? Then it's fine. Alright, let's continue with the topic

from the previous lesson, regarding the structure of Silhouette Knights..."

All the students retorted in their heart: "How is that fine!", but the teacher decided that he would lose if he felt bothered by Eru and carried on teaching adamantly.

The outsider who hogged the first row, Ernesti Echevarria, glanced at the teacher and opened the textbook happily, preparing to take notes. Being so pleased because of a lesson, the middle schoolers felt too lazy to retort. And so, the crafting faculty accepted this outsider and the course somehow carried on smoothly.

Before dabbling in the design of Silhouette Knights, you have to familiarize yourself with the structure, this was a simple rationale. But what needs to be done specifically? That is hard to answer. One of the reasons is the difficulty in constructing the Silhouette Knights. It requires crafting, magic, and alchemy, so there is a lot to learn, meaning it is a problem of the amount of studying materials. That is why only people who are going to make Silhouette Knights, Knightsmiths, will learn how to design them. Knight runners won't have the time to learn all of this knowledge.

This might be true, but we can't apply this to the boy intruding into the crafting faculty... Ernesti. He is a robot nerd whose obsession wasn't even cured after reincarnation. He read volumes of robot designs and specification, even memorizing the name and models of robots. If you teach the methods of crafting a giant robot to this guy, what will happen? He will treat the textbook as a bible and study it religiously, preparing for lessons and revising the topic until perfection, going beyond the scope of the lesson and researching tons of information. His attitude is great, but his burning passion makes the middle schoolers older than him back away.

"... Comparing the current military model Karrdator and the previous generation Salodrea..."

As Eru listened to the teacher's explanation, he flipped his textbook. He always sat in the middle of the first row, and after a few lessons, that became his permanent seat.

The elderly teacher scribbled on the black board with the clear sound of chalk, listing the basic structure of the Silhouette Knights. This includes the 5 main crucial elements... The 'magius engine' acting as the brain, the 'ether reactor' that serves as the heart, the 'crystal tissue' simulating muscles, 'inner skeleton' reinforcing the structure, and the 'outer skin' as the armour.

"As everyone knows, these 2 models have similar ether reactors; the difference in power output lies in the crystal tissues..."

The Silhouette Knights are powered by the mana produced from the ether reactor. The ether reactor converts the ether in the world into mana, simulating the organic functions of living things in the form of machinery. As long as there is ether around it, this device can keep on running. Normally, the mana produced by the reactor will turn back to ether and spread into the atmosphere. Hence, there is a need for ether to circulate within the crystal tissues to maintain its form as mana.

Crystal tissues are crystal catalyst that have been modified through alchemy, able to change its shape under the influence of specific scripts and mana. Apart from using it as the muscles of Silhouette Knights, this property also allows it to be used as mana batteries.

"The script in the magius engine has been refined, but the improvement is not significant. Because of its ruggedness, it has been used for over 300 years without major changes..."

The magius engine is responsible for controlling the heart and muscle. It contains gigantic and complicated magic scripts, allowing the pilot to control the Silhouette Knights.

The inner skeleton and outer skin are simply a metallic frame and armour. But current technology cannot create the skeletons of the gigantic humanoid robots as a single part. They have to be made from the combination of smaller parts, welded together with physical boost magic and scripts to support the body weight. This allows the Silhouette to look tougher in its defence, but creates a flaw of the body being unable to support its own weight without a constant flow of magic.

Silhouette Knights simulate the functions of living beings, an existence created by the combined efforts of crafting, magic, and alchemy.

"Please turn to the next page. This covers the Silhouette arms of the Silhouette Knights. Although it is not directly related to design, this is still important, so please study this carefully."

Silhouette arms refer to the ranged attack equipment used by Silhouette Knights. Surprisingly, the Silhouette Knights, which are a combination of magical parts, are not able to use ranged magic on their own. The magius engine can only be used to move the Silhouette Knight itself and does not include ranged attack function. The knight runner is required to construct a magic script when spells are needed.

Of course, casting magic at the level of Silhouette Knights... known as Overt spells... is impossible for humans. There are rare cases where an individual is able to process the magic, but constructing the script needs time and cannot be used in actual battle. For Silhouette Knights to use overt spells in the heat of a fight, the magic script has to be prepared in advance.

"For people aiming to be knightsmiths such as yourself, there is no need to study 'Emblem Graph', but you must master the script at the level of Culverin."



Emblem graph doesn't construct magic through the use of scripts like the magius circuit of living beings. Emblems are drawn on the exterior of objects, which are then used to cast spells... It uses the theory that scripts can be visualized in the form of a pattern. When using emblem graph to cast magic, the mana can be channelled directly to the object the emblem is grafted on in order to activate it. It appears to be a convenient technique so far, but because drawing the script needs a large physical area, it will run into the problem of the equipment being too unwieldy. If you take into account the difficulty and effort in making them, the emblems are not really marketable to citizens.

But the advantage of using emblem graph is the ability to prepare any spell as long as there is enough space. You just need to provide the power and the spells can be used without much control. Simply put, this technique is suitable for the gigantic Silhouette Knight which is made from the combination of magical parts; the only disadvantage is that each emblem can only use one spell. That is why the army created a variety of silhouette arms in order to deal with different situations. It is common to see a Silhouette Knight going into battle with several arsenals on its back.

A bell in the distance rang when the class reached this point, announcing the end of the lesson.

"Ara, time is up so I will stop here. Remember to revise today's content... Ernesti, please 'have mercy' on us."

Ernesti watched the teacher leave after uttering these words, he was uncertain of what he did wrong. He took plenty of notes today as well. By the way, his progress already exceeds normal students by months.

After finishing classes for the day, Ernesti returned home and took out his books to revise the content of the day's lesson. Although he

meets up with Chid and Ady for training occasionally, he preferred to head home and review whenever there are Silhouette Knights design classes.

Eru learned a lot from the class. Thanks to that, he gradually grasped the basics of Silhouette Knight designing. But the more he understood, the more questions he has for the parts beyond the basics. In the construction of Silhouette Knights, the crucial elements, such as crystal tissues, inner skeleton, and outer skin, are subjected to lots of wear and tear. Because of this, the country invested heavily in the education of engineers and alchemists. This ensures that forts in the front lines and towns with appropriate facilities can supply the Silhouette Knights with necessary parts. A lot of crafting faculty students apart from Eru had actual experience in crafting. But the details about the magius engine and the ether reactor... the heart and soul of Silhouette Knights are classified. The lesson covered their functions, but their interior structure remained a mystery.

Silhouette Knights are a major military force for the nation and a problematic property for normal citizens to possess. Its distribution is controlled by the government and the construction methods of the core parts are national secrets. Even the 'kingdom of knights', Fremmevira, is strict about this. Withholding the crafting methods led to a drop in production efficiency, so it cannot be mass produced, making the value of each Silhouette Knight sky rocket. Silhouette Knights are treated as expensive tactical weapons because of this.

"...That might be the case, but I am not worried about the magius engine."

It is already known that the magius engine is used to control the movement of the whole robot. That means similar scripts can emulate this. Simply put, Eru intended to hack into the magius engine. It was an idea Eru had come up with because of his

incredible processing ability and background in software engineering. But he can't do anything when it involves something that is not dependent on theory, emulating the fundamentals of magic in this world, the heart of magic technology... the ether reactor.

"But... without more clues, I will come to a bottleneck... After all, 'that world' doesn't have the concept of ether."

Uguu, Eru frowned and rolled around in bed.

He understood one thing from class; the ether reactor was made from a special mineral called 'fairy stones'. But the mining and usage methods are unknown, all information regarding fairy stones is kept secret. Although Eru's goal was to build his own Silhouette Knight, the worst case scenario was to buy an ether reactor. But even so, the price of ether reactors made that plan impractical.

"Eh, no use worrying over it. Let's start researching from what I already know."

Eru mumbled and returned to his desk. The notes he took did not have any blank space, so he took out another self-study notebook. He dipped his pen in ink and immersed himself in preparation, in revision, a time to research his hobby. Eru lived an incredibly busy life, but it was a blissful life according to him.

Eru's student life traversing between the knighthood and crafting faculties continued for some time.

In the beginning, others were irritated by Eru's unprecedented actions, but they became used to it with the passage of time. Everyone started to notice his cute features that Eru had inherited from his mother. The short Eru who happily listened to the fundamentals of Silhouette Knight Design was treated like a mascot,

and Eru had gotten used to being patted on the head as a greeting. And one day...

"Ara, you are..."

Eru finished his crafting classes and was on the way back to knighthood faculty when he heard a familiar voice. He looked back and saw a lady with wavy blond hair, a nice pair of eye brows, and slightly drooping blue eyes that were squinting because of a smile.

"You are Ernesti... right?"

Archid and Adeltrud's sister... Stefania Serrati said as she walked to his side, bending down with a smile to accommodate Eru's height. Eru replied politely making her even happier.

"Ara, I remember, you are the same grade as Archid right? Why are you here?"

Even though she looked joyful, she still asked. This was the secondary school campus, not a place where a primary school student like Eru should be visiting. When she heard Eru's honest reply that he was attending a middle school crafting course, her eyes opened wide from shock.

"Eh, you are really smart, but why are you rushing to learn this?"

In a way, this is an obvious question. A student will be hard pressed handling the work at their grade level. In the long history of Laihiala pilot academy, there are very few such independent students. Eru's answer was very simple and to the point.

"Because I'm interested."

"Interest...? Even though it's school work? Hmm... I see, you are a bit special."

Because there was another class, the two chatted as they walked. Eru's action were unpredictable. Stefania was surprised sometimes, patted his head sometimes, and was always smiling in a great mood.

As class had just ended, there were lots of commuting students in the corridor, but they were shocked by the sight of the blonde girl and silver haired boy, giving way to them. Thanks to this, their journey proceeded smoothly, reaching the freshmen campus of primary school in no time. Stefania was in the 3rd year of primary school and needed to go to another campus. As she was leaving Eru reluctantly...

"Ah, Eru... found!"

Someone ran over at a high speed, it was Adeltrud who had seen Eru by coincidence. The petite Eru is easily hidden when in a crowd, but with everyone avoiding him, he was readily discovered. Adeltrud looked gleeful when she was coming over but stopped when she saw her sister beside Eru.

"Ah, Onee... Onee-sama"

"Ara, Adeltrud."

Ady alternated her eyes between the two and seemed to be quizzing Eru about what was going on with them. Eru didn't give a direct answer and smiled awkwardly. Stefania smiled gently as she approached Ady. From their previous encounter, Ady seemed to be bad at dealing with her sister from a different mother, but Stefania didn't seem to be bothered.

"Don't be so guarded, I won't bully you."

"Yes..."

Seeing Ady act so hesitant despite answering obediently, the two of them smiled bitterly.

"But why is Eru together with Onee-sama?"

"Ara, it's simple... because I like smart, cute kids!"

Stefania placed her hands on her hips and declared confidently. What a forceful way of putting it. Ady looked like she was frozen on the spot, convinced by Stefania. As expected of sisters, Eru thought.

"I've had my eyes on him since the last time we met, and he is the centre of some 'topics'. We chatted just now, and I discovered that this child is both smart and cute!"

Stefania became more excited as she spoke, finally giving in and hugging Eru.

"Nah, Eru wants to be a knight right? How about this? Want to protect onee-chan as my knight? I can welcome you with 3 meals a day and sleeping together."

"Wait... wait, no! Eru is my soft toy!"

(What is with this family, scary. And Miss Ady, what do you mean by soft toy?)

The stiff Ady who was rooted because of the impact of the confession was yelling now, snatching Eru back. She might have been too tense, but even her tone had reverted back to normal. Stefania was smiling coldly. Because she was beautiful, this made her even scarier. Eru saw her close her hands as she said quietly. "Ara, so that's how it is~". Eru decided to pretend he didn't see anything.

"Ady, your tone is back to normal."

Ady covered her mouth, her face seemed to be saying 'this is bad'. Stefania shook her head immediately. "It's okay. You don't need to try so hard in school. I am not like Baltsar who is petty about such things."

"Since Onee-sama... says that..."

"Before that, Ady? Can you let go?"

"Eh? Ah, sorry. You are just the right size so I hugged you without thinking..."

Eru broke free from Ady while Stefania looked at her longingly.

"Yeah... Eru's height is just nice for a hug..."

"That's right Onee-sama, and his hair so soft and smooth..."

"Adeltrud... as expected of my sister!"

"Onee-sama..."

Eru put some distance between the perverted sisters who were holding hands. There were many things he wanted to retort, but Stefania seemed so happy. Maybe she was just joking with Eru as an excuse to be closer to her sister. He decided to think of it that way and hope it was true.

The sisters ignored Eru who was averting his gaze, and talked about how much they love cute things. Their discussion was so passionate that you could see a pink aura around them. Eru felt like escaping reality, thinking 'just do what you girls want', and he suddenly remembered an important thing.

"Ah, the next lesson is starting."

The bell signalling the start of the class rang as if on cue. The three of them rushed to their classrooms in a panic, but unfortunately, they arrived late and were lectured by their teachers.

"Oh, isn't that Archid? It's been a while." Just as Eru and the others were talking noisily, Chid and someone else met by coincidence in another place. This was the number one person that Chid didn't want to meet... Chid and Ady's half-brother... Baltsar Serrati, someone who had always picked on them.

Baltsar had normal features on a decent face, but his scowling smile was a minus. Chid frowned reflexively when he saw the irritating face of his brother but managed to keep his composure thanks to training since he was young.

"Long time no see... Baltsar Onii-sama."

"I heard the rumours, although the contents are idiotic... I heard that there is an amazing freshman this year eh?"

Baltsar said suddenly. He was probably trying to find fault since he usually ignores what Chid says. Even though Chid hated that attitude, he didn't complain. Baltsar was taller than Chid and seemed to be happy about something as he looked down on him and continued:

"After asking, didn't that freshmen have some familiar companions."

"Really? I never heard anything about that..."

It's finally here, Chid braced himself. Baltsar was more imposing than usual, there was no way the conversation would become cheerful.

"Hey, is that the attitude you show your brother? Are you a brat that



didn't learn manners?"

"...Sorry."

"Forget it. I am generous and will forgive a brat without manners like you."

Baltsar squinted his eyes and deepened his smile, a creepy smile like a predator hunting its prey. Chid worked hard in hiding his wariness.

(The actual topic is coming, how can I get away from this...?)

"I heard you guys weaseled into the advanced class. That trash of a class has grown so much, but, even so, I will praise you honestly. Eh, although you are a bastard child, we are still family after all. It would be shameful if you were not able to do only this much... That's right, I said 'only this much'. Freshmen brats shouldn't know much of anything right? But I heard a rumour that made me concerned. How boring, if it was true..."

Baltsar squinted his eyes further, Chid felt a sense of uneasiness down his spine.

"I heard you guys made quite a scene? Hey, that's not true, is it?"

Baltsar's smile vanished without warning as he drew near menacingly; speaking in a low voice so no one can else could hear them:

"Don't you think you are acting out of line for a mere child of a mistress? Huh? A bastard child? The rumours are probably lies, I don't know what trickery you used, but wouldn't it mislead everyone."

"No, they did not misunderstand. Onii-sama, we..."

"Enough, shut up."

The smile on Baltsar's mouth had turned into a frown. Seeing Baltsar getting emotional, Chid was tense and ready for anything. But unexpectedly, Baltsar said without emotion:

"Archid, what are you scheming?"

"What... scheming?"

"Casting middle spells easily just after enrollment, planning a route to be a noble knight? Is that the extent of your ambition? Are you planning to bring that title to 'my house' as a visiting gift?"

Baltsar asked with his poker face.

"Nope, I told you before. We don't want to pester the main family. My ambition to be a knight is for my mother and our future livelihood."

"...Alright, as a gentle elder, I will believe my foolish brother."

"I am very... grateful."

Baltsar resumed his cold smile, patted Chid on the shoulder, and left. Chid who was left alone sighed deeply.

(He didn't plan to do anything to me here, but he won't let us off so easily. If he is just picking on me, I can endure it. I hope he doesn't cause any stupid commotion.)

But the looming sense of trouble lingered within Chid, contrary to what he thought.

## **Knight's & Magic Vol 1 Chapter 4**

This short chapter ends the school arc.

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Spring of C.E. 1276.

It has been 2 years since Ernesti and the others enrolled in Laihiala pilot academy. Their lifestyle remained the same. First of all, Ernesti Echevarria...

"Alright, this year we will be working on 'Silhouette Knight Design and Application'... Ah, you are here..."

During this period when the school welcomes new students and the new academic year begins, the teacher who came into the classroom glanced at the short student occupying the center seat of the front row. As a third year primary school student, Eru had gained fame for attending the craftsmen faculty's courses despite being from the Knighthood Faculty.

"The Knighthood faculty's teachers have surrendered."

"Yes, I am happy to meet teachers who are so understanding."

He slightly tilted his head and smiled. He may have looked really cute, but with his background in bullying the teachers to accommodate his schedule, the scene was not warming at all. After promoting to the next academic grade, Eru used his abilities to destroy all of the classes that got in the way of the courses he

wanted to attend. The Knighthood teachers were deeply depressed over this, and the craftsmen faculty had given in. The teacher sighed deeply and focused on his lesson. If you ignore his shenanigans, Eru is a bright and passionate student, so the teachers gave him more leeway.

Next are the twins Archid and Adeltrud.

This is the training grounds of the Knighthood faculty. Class was in session so no one should be here. The boy and girl practicing in the field were Archid and Adeltrud. They followed Eru's lead to go beyond the scope of the lessons given by the school and had been conducting personal training. For the past two years, instead of taking magic classes, they had been conducting this special training. Eru was not present because he had to attend some other class.

"Okay, I will be going all out next."

"What's up? Your hits are harder than usual."

Chid waved his hands at the suspicious Ady, gesturing that nothing was wrong as he tightened his grip on his weapon. His build was excellent for his age, and the sword in his hand was one size bigger than the standard. Even though it was a wooden sword used for training, it was still imposing.

In contrast, Ady held two thin swords, and her battle style was similar to Eru's, focusing more on agility rather than strength.

Apart from that, their weapons had a strange attachment. Made from the wood of the white mist tree, a gun staff based off of

normal magic staves... the latest 'Gandiva' model. Driven by his interest, Eru used the knowledge from his previous life to design the 'Winchester', but there was no need for the twins to use the same weapon. Instead, their Gandiva were more polished, evolving to the state where it could be attached to any sword. It was designed by Eru and made by their wonderful neighbor... Termonen Workshop.

The two of them adopted a stance and faced each other, activating their magic before raising their swords. They switched smoothly between sword attacks and magic, displaying the power of their weapon, which merges the sword and the staff... the ability of the gun staff. They were using limited physical boost. After Ernesti tweaked with its script, the spell was easier to use than the previous version, and more importantly, it improved the sustainability. They held true to Eru's teachings, training their body and magic at the same time, efficiently improving their mana pools. The crystallization of their hard work was clear for all to see.

With the start of the battle training, Chid took a strong step forward. His strengthened muscles propelled him ahead, putting his opponent within sword range. This was Chid's preferred fighting style... practical usage of the length of his oversized sword. Thanks to Mathias's training, his style, which places emphasis on the gauging of distance and skill, was a real threat.

Ady used the agility of her swords to counter this. Because of her limited physical boost, her slashes turned into a whirlwind, bypassing Chid's sword and going straight for his body. Even though his weapon was large, Chid still managed to shorten the attack range of his sword to ward off Ady's attack. But Ady didn't back down, shifting positions constantly as she waited for an opening. The fierce

exchange made others doubt that this was really a mock battle. The two continued to spar until their mana and endurance were sapped.

Because these two learned magic from Eru who thought about things differently, this sort of training was normal for them. But simple things for them... using magic and swords simultaneously in training, were not taught in primary school. If a third party was around, they would probably doubt their common sense.

"Really... I can't stand you guys, what did Eru teach you..."

That's how Stefania who was watching felt.

"Hmm... it was magic and sword right?"

Watching the twins tilt their heads and answer at the same time, Stefania could only smile bitterly. This was not a style you could learn just by 'learning magic'.

"With your standards, I'm not sure if I can win."

"Really? Winning against the top student of knighthood faculty who is also the student council president can't be that easy?"

Stefania had reasons to be worried. Normal students will learn using magic and sword during battles in secondary school. If someone started doing so from primary school, how far could they grow? The answer was right before her.

She was the top in her faculty in results, daughter of a Marquis, and with her excellent personality, she was elected as the student

council president. But after seeing the capability of her half-siblings, Stefania was still shocked. The twins were too used to Eru's standard, so their benchmark was different from normal people. Stefania thought about correcting their mindset in order to avoid trouble in the future.

There was only the three of them in the training ground. They were focused on training and distracting themselves with chit chat, not paying attention to their surroundings, so they failed to notice the shadow lurking behind the thin wall near the training grounds entrance.

While class was in session, the sound of footsteps echoed in the empty dormitory, the students were all away.

The person walking was agitated, his pace fast as he reached his desired room shortly, his dorm room. He unlocked the door with trembling hands and rushed in as if chased. For a dormitory, this personal room was spacious and was arranged by the school with safety considerations in mind. Aristocrats staying in dorms are all assigned personal rooms.

The male student stood by the door listlessly for a while. He couldn't hold in his agitation anymore and kicked the furniture in the room, the sound reverberating loudly.

"What is... that... how could it be... damn, damn damn!"

The male student, Baltsar Serrati, cursed, feeling extremely frustrated. He was upset because he had witnessed the training session of his sister and half-siblings.

Baltsar was a first year student in middle school of the knighthood faculty and has just started using magic and sword at the same time. He was troubled by the difficult training, but his siblings were doing what he couldn't with ease. It was clear that their abilities are far ahead of him. For the proud Baltsar, he can't stand a bastard children were stronger than him. This thought filled him with rage, and he realized the existence of Chid and Ady was a threat to his goal.

Baltsar's goal was related to his 'family'.

His family... The 'Marquis Serrati family', is one of the most notable aristocratic families in Fremmevira kingdom. Their territory isn't large, and it occupies a place that is flat and filled with farmland. It is situated to the east of the kingdom near to the Bocuse Sea of Forest and suffers from frequent attacks by demon beasts. In order to fend them off, the marquis commands one of the top bands of knights within the country... the 'Red Rhino Knights'. It is a critical place that borders the frontlines, and as a result, the land has prospered economically, with merchants passing through the main economic artery constantly.

Marquis Serrati, the ruler of this land, had three children. The eldest, Artos, was the heir of the marquis, receiving an education befitting a noble, and was starting to help his father manage the territory. The eldest daughter, Stefania, was studying in her second year of middle school at Laihiala pilot academy, while the second son, Baltsar, was in his first year.

"If this carries on... If that brat shows up at the main family..."



The titles of nobility are basically inherited by the eldest son, the other children do not get any land or property. They need to forge their own path forward, most of them becoming knights or bureaucrats. Baltsar chose becoming a knight without hesitation since the Serrati marquis clan was in command of the famous Red Rhino knights. In the Kingdom of knights, protecting the people from demon beast attacks is the noblesse oblige of the aristocrats. It was natural for him to set this as his goal.

"If those bastards come into contact with the Red Rhino Knights... maybe..."

The entire kingdom, including the Serrati counties, have no competition[\[1\]](#) amongst its knights. The knights are expected to be ready to fight the demon beasts at a moment's notice, and it is very demanding in terms of ability for those aspiring to be commanders. Being strong in combat skills doesn't guarantee the right to be a leader of the knights, but the stronger someone is, the more respect they will garner in a military organization.

Baltsar imagined himself leading the order of knights with his brother. He had never doubted that future until the rise of the twins. This cast a shadow in his heart. Even though they are children of a mistress, their capabilities are strong, and with ties to the marquis by bloodline, they might seize the advantage and realize their dream before Baltsar. His entitled position being stripped by his bastard younger siblings was a nightmare.

"That's right... I have to get rid of them."

He reflected upon why he had let the situation deteriorate so much, and the conclusion was that he was too careless, thinking of them only as bastards who would never match him. Because of his foolish overconfidence, he ignored that incident during the first day of school. He realized he was wrong, the situation was very pressing and every second counts. He needed to work fast to dispose of them, but the twins were too strong, it would be unwise to challenge them head on. He needed to suppress their strength, a safe and efficient way.

Baltsar raised his head, his worries all gone.

He was not dumb. His willingness to sacrifice others allowed him to come up with despicable and effective methods. The usual cold smile widened, his ugly feelings stronger than before.

One day after class, Batson Termonen walked along the corridor with heavy steps, preparing to head for his next class. He looked around and discovered a familiar figure. He noticed that person because she was a childhood friend.

"Is that Ady? Who is she... with?"

As he wondered about what Ady was doing, Batson became suspicious. Not because Ady was with someone, but because she was with a student he didn't know. From afar, her face looked stiff.

"Should I alert them?"

Batson was not overreacting because Ady was with a stranger, but

her expression looked weird, and that worried Batson. She might be in trouble, so Batson decided to express his spirit of consideration.

After making up his mind, Batson turned around and searched for his petite friend who was probably in a classroom nearby.

"Baltsar Onii-sama, what's wrong?"

Adeltrud clenched her fists, her eyes searching around her and her slightly fierce demeanor growing stronger.

Baltsar stood before her with his usual smile. That was still bearable. Although it upsets people who look at him, Ady had gotten used to it. The problem was with the people around them. There were three of them behind Baltsar and four behind Ady. Male students she does not know blocked her way after Baltsar gave a signal. They were probably his lackeys.

Ady was stopped by Baltsar in the corridor and brought to a deserted area. Although she was not close with Baltsar, they were still family, so she let down her guard. Ady thought she was being brought to a quiet place so others wouldn't hear him picking on her. She was surrounded before she realized it. From the atmosphere and their unfriendly gazes, Ady guessed that this was probably not a 'happy chat'.

"These are my friends. Nothing much, they are here to help me teach disobedient brats their manners eh?"

Baltsar's companions smiled quietly.

"I learned about manners in class, there is no need to trouble everyone."

"The teacher is not enough to teach the brats of a mistress. Your brother is teaching you personally, shouldn't you be lowering your head and begging for your lesson?"

A hand stuck out from behind Baltsar.

"That's right, be a good girl and..."

The nameless lackey was careless... he thought they had the overwhelming advantage with their numbers, and the target was a girl younger than them. Ady judged that there was no need to argue anymore, pulling out her gun staff before he finished. She immediately used limited physical boost and elbowed the lackey in the stomach before he could react.

"You are too noisy!"

She needed to break through the encirclement to get away. She dropped one opponent and took the chance to run with her enhanced leg power. Because of her sudden retaliation, the encirclement was full of holes, but just as she was about to get away...

"Spark Dart."

A arrow of lightning landed on Ady's back at the command of this calm voice. She couldn't even scream, a hoarse sound escaped from the her mouth as the air was pushed out of her lungs. It was not

lethal, but the direct lightning hit numbed her body, so she tripped and fell.

(Uguu! I screwed up... can't, conscious... fading...)

Incredibly, she remembered the smug expression on Baltsar's face as she blacked out. He was not haughty like usual, but was wearing a foreboding smile.

Sometime after Ady blacked out.

Chid had no idea what happened, and he was just a bit concerned that Ady didn't return when class had begun. When he was thinking about ditching class to search for her, he met an unexpected guest.

"Oh? You were in class... that saves me the trouble."

Baltsar appeared before him. Chid was shocked, he had maintained his distance from Baltsar during his time in the main family, and Baltsar always chose inconspicuous places to talk to him. But they were conversing in a public place right now and Chid was unsure of how to address him.

"Senpai, do you have anything for me?"

Chid couldn't hide his confusion and asked. Baltsar was smiling as usual as he announced in a loud voice:

"I challenge you to a duel!"

The rowdy classroom was silenced, followed by an eruption of noise. Students in the classroom chatted excitedly with each other, discussing the current exciting topic 'duel!'.

"What are you saying..."

"You can't understand? Ha, I expected as much. I have been letting an eye sore like you off for too long, I can't forgive such insolence anymore. That's right, I have to set you straight."

Chid was baffled because everything had been set in motion without his knowledge. Baltsar's actions confounded him. But he was sure of one thing.

"I don't get what you are thinking... Duel? Alright, it's on!"

He also hated Baltsar. His fighting spirit overcame the query in his heart, and he accepted readily. Chid would let it go if Baltsar had picked on him verbally as usual. But if Baltsar issues a challenge head on, Chid had no intention of hiding his displeasure.

"How uncouth... your manners are lacking. Let's see how long you can stay arrogant."

Class was abandoned, and the whole group tagged along with them out of the campus.

Laihiala pilot academy restricts fights between students. It is ridiculous for knights protecting citizens to fight amongst themselves. Those who break the rules will face all sorts of punishment. However, the only exception is a fight known as a 'duel'.

Duels have their own set of rules: they must be one on one; the duel requires both parties to agree... a third party has to act as the referee... the referee has absolute authority; the match will be decided when one party loses consciousness or surrenders; they have to use wooden training swords, and spells that release projectiles are banned to avoid collateral damage to others. In the end, the main point is 'settle it yourself'.

By its nature, knighthood faculty has lots of hot headed students, so settling disputes by duels is common. There is even a fixed place within the academy known as the 'duel arena'.

News of Baltsar and Chid's duel spread through the academy instantly. They had been anticipating this and the challenge became issued prominently, resulting in a large crowd gathering to witness the battle.

A student who was unrelated to either of them volunteered to be the referee. He read out the rules of the duel in a loud voice and confirmed the acceptance by the two participants. When they faced each other, Baltsar took out something from his shirt pocket. Chid turned stiff when he saw it.

(Isn't that... The hair pin Ady was wearing in the morning!? Why... Did he...!?)

The shocked Chid looked at Baltsar, and their eyes met. Baltsar was smiling more intensely today, and Chid understood his goal, why Baltsar had proposed a duel and why it was being done in public.

"You... What did you do to Ady..."

"Hmmm? I don't know what you mean."

Baltsar's expression twisted as if he was trying to control his laughter, confirming Chid's suspicion.

"That's right, I heard a rumor the other day. You can use high spells as a primary school student, an amazing achievement! Can you show them to me?"

Chid made a spiteful groan. It was obvious why Baltsar raised this issue, he wanted everyone present to hear Chid saying he couldn't use them to shame him. The way he flashed the hair pin made Baltsar's intentions clear.

"... I can't use it anyway..."

Chid answered as if he was squeezing air out of his lungs, baffling the audience. Chid was one of the famous trio in primary school that was exempted from class by the teachers. The crowd was chattering, wondering why someone so far ahead in magic education was saying something like this? Were the rumors false?

"Huh? What a joke! Ha! The gossips are fake? Really, to be exposed so easily! Where did that attitude of yours go? Hah!"

If eyes could kill, Chid would have murdered Baltsar with his gaze by now. Baltsar didn't mind and continued with a laugh:

"Hey hey hey, wanting to stand out even if you have to lie, what a



naughty boy. Correcting the error of juniors is the senior's job right? Okay, it's about time to begin."

Baltsar lifted his sword and staff while Chid quietly attached his Gandiva to his wooden sword. What followed was not a duel anymore but an execution.

"What's with you? Such a spoilsport. You can't use magic, and you're subpar with swordsmanship!?"

Baltsar taunted as they sparred. Chid was enraged and wanted to counter attack, but Baltsar was flashing the hair pin from time to time to warn him.

About 30 minutes into the fight, everyone could see that the battle was lopsided. Chid was slow and was the only one taking hits. He tried countering a few times, but his strength was lacking. The pitiful state of the rumored student disappointed the crowd.

"Rumors are just rumors", "Where did the misunderstanding start".

"The ending will be the arrogant junior facing reality", "Such a boring fight"... There were even some who left impatiently.

But some of the students felt uneasy. Chid was hit directly a lot of time, but he kept up his stance. He didn't take damage? Baltsar who was enjoying the overwhelming advantage noticed it and took pleasure in tormenting Chid.

Since he can't defeat Baltsar, Chid had to tank the attacks. He was unsure of how long he could endure. Even so, he was still waiting for the chance to counter attack. He didn't know if he still had a chance, but he clung on desperately to this hope. Chid's most

trustworthy friend is not here, but he definitely knows about this commotion after such a big uproar, so his absence means he is on the move.

(I leave it to you my friend... You are my only hope!)

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[1] The words here were “pretty vast” and it made no sense to me at all. I made it “competition” instead to make it related here. I judged this to be better and it made more sense that way.



Chid grit his teeth and took the hit from Baltsar with a staggering stance.

At the same time, Ernesti was walking quietly along the corridor. After listening to his childhood friend Batson's explanation, Eru had begun searching for Ady. But he was troubled by the fact that there were no clues. Suddenly, someone hugged him from behind. Eru was startled and looked up to see Stefania caressing his hair with a blissful face.

"Ah, so soft and smooth that you wouldn't ever want to let go."

"...E, Stefania-Senpai?"

"It's the fault of these silky smooth locks... You. Impish. Devil."

Stefania rubbed her face with Eru's hair as she poked his cheek. Eru was baffled by her reaction as usual, but inspiration struck. Maybe Stefania has some clues.

"Stefania-senpai, you came at just the right time. Do you know where Ady is?"

Stefania who was all smiles became sullen and worried. She looked at the confused Eru straight in the eye.

"I think Baltsar was meeting Ady."

"Balt... Your brother? He, Chid, and Ady..."

Eru hesitated uncharacteristically. He had heard about Baltsar... and things about him. If Ady was taken by him, there was no telling what could happen. But Eru still hesitated, since this was a family affair after all. Eru couldn't judge how deeply he could interfere, but Stefania blew all of his worries away with one sentence.

"... Also, Balt brought lots of lackeys with him."

"I don't like commenting on another family's affairs, but that sounds ominous."

Eru's heart was not as calm as his tone. It would be fine if it was in the realm of 'sibling fights'. But this is different if he brought a gang with him, which means Ady is in danger.

"I can't really ask you for help for this... but I hope you can look for Ady."

"... Will that be fine? Let me say this first, if he harms Ady, I won't forgive him even if he is your brother."

Eru's eyes are usually matured, but a dangerous gleam shined in them. Chid and Ady are his best friends in this world, if someone brought a group to harm them, he didn't plan to hold back. Stefania watched him seethe in anger and drooped her beautiful eye brows.

"... Please restrain from killing him."

"You are pretty cool about this."

"It's fine if Baltsar moves alone. Well, that's not really good... But I can stop him. But it's not the same this time. I can't overlook this as the student council president or as his sister."

Stefania said softly as she tightened her hug slowly. Eru couldn't imagine her expression and simply asked:

"Can you tell me where Ady has been brought to?"

Laihiala pilot academy has a large campus and most of it isn't in use. Ady and Baltsar's lackeys are likely in one of the empty classrooms.

The group sat Ady on a chair, tied her legs down with her hands behind her. It had been about an hour since Ady was knocked out by Baltsar, and she still hadn't awoken. The four lackeys who surrounded her were arguing about something.

"Cheh! Little brat, she hit me!"

"Hey, she's still sleeping, calm down."

So many people had been left to guard the unconscious Ady to prevent her from making a scene when she awakens. The noisy boy was the one who took an elbow from Ady, who had just regained consciousness.

"Why? She is out and tied down, there's no need to be afraid."

"Says the guy who got knocked down."

"Uguu! I was careless!"

He grabbed Ady's hair and lifted her head, clenching his fist with a violent smile.

"Look at this brat, getting cocky because I didn't go all out. She is going to get it now!"

The other lackeys thought he was going too far. He didn't fall because he was holding back; he was knocked out in an instant because he was too careless. And if he punched her and Ady wakes up, things will get messy. Their goal was to restrain her for a short time, it will be easier if she continues sleeping. Just as another lackey was about to stop him...

"Hello... Anyone here.... Oh, there is."

At this moment, a shadow appeared from the back of the classroom.

The group naively thought that no one would come, so their reactions were slower than the intruder's. When they realized their situation, they saw a silver bullet shooting out from a weird magic staff towards their faces.

The intruder... Ernesti knew his 'hunch was right' when he saw the lackeys, or rather Adeltrud, who was tied to the chair behind them. All that was left was to dispose of the enemy. He drew Winchester without hesitation and cast a wind middle spell at his left and right... Aero damned. The projectile hit the two at the back of the room directly, and they were blasted away before they could even scream. Eru didn't wait for them to land before activating physical boost to enhance his agility and strike at the boy that was about to punch Ady. The boy panicked and attempted to block, but he couldn't match Eru whose speed had been enhanced. Eru cast a Sonic Boom with his staff while running, blowing the boy away.

Seeing three of his companions flying in an instant, the remaining lackey gave up attempting to understand the situation. Regrettably, his opponent wasn't gentle enough to let this chance slip by. The lackey raised his staff unconsciously, but it was broken in half. The other Winchester swing back horizontally... That was the last thing he remembered.

After instantly knocking out the four lackeys like a whirlwind, Eru checked to make sure they were really down and ran to Ady. He cut the ropes on her and checked for injuries. Ady seemed to be fine, and her breathing was normal, so she was probably unconscious. Eru was relieved after confirming that Ady was safe and proceeded to tie up the lackeys who were knocked out. Fortunately they prepared ropes... although they were not meant to be used on them. After making sure they couldn't move, he looked towards the direction of the arena.

"There might not be much time left."

From the commotion he saw on the way here, Eru could imagine the situation over there. Ady was kidnapped then Baltsar appeared before Chid, his actions are too easy to guess. That's why he was worried about Chid who was caught in the middle of all this. But he believed Chid would not give in so easily. Eru believed that if he hurried, he would be able to make it. That's why he wanted to rush over immediately, but...

Eru looked at Ady on the floor and felt troubled. Should he feel depressed? It would be a hassle to bring Ady over since she is taller than him. But he couldn't leave her here like this. Uguu, he groaned and gave in, struggling to carry her in his arms. It was a challenge to keep his balance, but Eru used magic he was proficient in to tide over it.

"I must make it in time..."

In order to reach Chid as soon as possible, Eru took long strides as he ran.

In a place known as the 'duel arena' within Laihiala pilot academy, two students had fought for over an hour. Although the battle was lopsided, it didn't feel like it would end any time soon.

After sparring this long, Baltsar finally realized something was off. As he expected, Chid's movements were sluggish because of his scheme, and his strikes landed true countless times. Even though it was a wooden sword, normal people would still have incurred serious wounds that would put them out of the fight. Chid's movements turned slower, but he showed no signs of taking serious damage. Chid might not be attacking because of the hostage, but his eyes were still strong. He was obviously waiting for his chance.

(Why can this brat take so much damage? Why is he still standing!? Is he going to buy time for Adeltrud to escape by herself? Adeltrud is



very agile, but there is no way she can escape, could it be...)

Baltsar laughed. Chid didn't know that Ady wasn't just tied up, she was under guard too. This means that his plan is doomed right from the start.

Chid was startled when Baltsar stopped attacking. Baltsar laughter was unnatural, and he attempted to stomp out Chid's hope.

"Archid, are you stalling for time?"

"...!"

"I thought so. You think 'that' will come if you wait? I can only tell you it is all in vain, 'that' is tied up securely."

Baltsar could hear Chid grinding his teeth, it stirred a murky joy within him.

"Well, I'm growing tired of this. It's regrettable, but let's end it, shall we?"

Baltsar flashed Ady's hairpin and lifted his wooden sword. Chid tensed his face. To be honest, he was not in good shape, contrary to how he looks. Although he was using 'some method' to minimize damage, it was still accumulating little by little. It will be hard to gauge whether Chid can endure an all out attack. But Baltsar has been sending out a strong message, 'do not dodge'. Baltsar probably wants to finish this for real, his next strike will be at full power. Chid was not confident that he could withstand this unscathed.

The two of them put more strength into their stance than before. The spectators that were still around could feel that this was the final attack and held their breath. As Baltsar was planning to launch his attack and charge in, someone intruded into the arena.

The figure leapt over the heads of the crowd and reached the front row. The arc of his jump was huge, and he was moving very quickly despite carrying a girl in his arms. His footfalls were silent as if he was stepping on a soft surface. The eyes of the audience naturally fall on this petite figure.

The figure was Eru carrying Ady. Baltsar cast a sideways glance over and made a twisted face when he recognized them. Ady should have been tied up, and he even posted guards. Did he overcome these obstacles and break Ady out? What are the guards doing? More importantly, who is this silver haired kid? Baltsar's head was full of questions, but no one was giving him answers.

Eru put Ady down. She had regained consciousness on their way here and stood up by herself. The first thing she did was glare at Baltsar. Then she turned towards Chid, sliding her thumb across her neck with a violent smile. Chid relaxed his body when he saw Ady safe and had the urge to smile. He nodded and complained to Eru who was standing behind her.

"So slow."

"Sorry, there are too many rooms."

"That so. Nah, never mind."

Chid smiled and raised his wooden sword. Nothing was holding him back. The time to counter attack was finally here.

Baltsar wanted to scream. He knew that this was the worst case scenario. But when he thought about it, the damage he inflicted on Chid remains, even though he lost the trump card of Ady as a hostage. He should take the chance and strike fast at full power. Baltsar put his thoughts into action and slashed at Chid.

But Chid displayed his outstanding agility. His sluggish movements

earlier seemed to be an act. He stepped forward lightly, parrying the attack and bumping Baltsar back with a shoulder tackle to keep their distance.

Chid had expended a considerable amount of mana after dragging the fight for so long. But he had been going through tough training under Eru since he was young and had enough gas left in the tank for one final attack.

"I will take back everything you owe me in one hit!"

Chid yelled loudly and activated the physical boost he learned from Eru. A wild surge of energy flowed through his body, and he sprinted forward with enough power to almost crack the floor. Before Baltsar could scramble and get up, Chid's sword hit his stomach. The air in his lungs was pushed out and the hoarse sound 'hyaa' escaped from Baltsar's mouth as he was launched into the air. Chid followed with a series of air combos before he fell to the ground. Baltsar's body was twisted unnaturally. Before Baltsar's body lost speed and started to tumble, Chid followed up with a roundhouse kick as the finishing move. Baltsar's body crumpled into a ball and rolled away before stopping in a heap several meters away.

The referee came to his senses after Chid took a deep breath and ran to Baltsar, finding him sprawled out like an old rag, his eyes white and mouth foaming. The result was obvious and the referee raised one hand to announced Chid's victory to the crowd.

The unexpected ending made the battle before look like a lie. The audience couldn't keep up with the rapid development.

Although Chid was as formidable as rumored, far beyond the capabilities of Baltsar, they did not understand why he was being overwhelmed for the past hour.

The spectators looked at the young girl running towards Chid. They

weren't stupid. They could link the appearance of her with the sudden display of strength by Chid. The answer was obvious.

The eyes staring at Baltsar turned cold. For knighthood majors, although duels are a way to resolve disputes, the glory of the victor is sacred. If anyone defiles the duel with despicable schemes, it goes against the way of the knight. The crowd was unsympathetic when Baltsar's lackeys carried him to the infirmary.

But Chid was badly injured, falling on his butt after letting out his victory cry.

"Chid! Hey Chid, are you okay?"

"I'm not doing so good, I took quite a beating."

"Your clothes are all tattered... Why didn't you dodge, stupid!"

"He kept waving that in front of me... I couldn't dodge even if I wanted to."

"...! Sorry, I was... too careless..."

Looking at Ady's tears and depressed face, Chid stroked her hair and said with a smile.

"Don't worry, this is all the fault of that idiot. And Eru, thanks, that was close."

"I'm glad I made it in time. But enough about this..."

Eru retrieved the hair pin from Baltsar without anyone noticing and handed it to Ady saying:

"You are all beat up, but seems like there are no serious injuries."

"Yeah, that guy was attacking recklessly because I couldn't dodge and was boasting about his skills."

Chid said sheepishly.

"I used physical boost and hard skin just before being hit to keep the damage down."

"I see. You managed to pull off a dangerous skill there."

"I can do it because I don't need to think about anything else... And it worked because he was so stupid. If he concentrated his attacks on my soft spots, I wouldn't have been able to hold out for so long."

"In other words, this guy lost because he was too cocky."

As Eru nodded, the crowd started to disperse.

"I will settle the loose ends. Ady, can you please take Chid to the infirmary?"

"I understand. Chid, can you stand?"

"I'm fine, my injuries are mostly bruises, just let me take it slow."

Eru saw the twins off, watching Chid's staggering figure as he and Ady headed towards the infirmary. Only Stefania was left in the arena.

"Is this okay? Your brother is badly injured."

"... He is, but his actions warranted this punishment."

Stefania looked refreshed and shook her head.

"That child... He resembles mother that way... About time he learns

his lesson."

"It must be hard on you..."

Eru felt conflicted when he thought about Chid and Ady's family troubles. But he shook his head and changed his mood.

"Can I leave the clean up to you?"

"Okay, I have to explain to my family anyway."

Eru bowed to Stefania who nodded in agreement and left. In the end, some of the audience were interested in this commotion and discussed the relations between Chid and the Serrati family.

A few days after the duel.

The disgraced Baltsar was warned sternly by the school and his family, and he was grounded at home after some deliberation. To reform him, Baltsar was sent to the Red Rhino Knights for training, the place of his dreams. It's hard to say if this is a good or bad thing. But it is great for Eru and co who had one less issue to worry about.

One day after school had peacefully ended, Ady spotted Eru who was reading in the campus garden. He is not a prominent person and it is not easy to spot his petite figure. But his head of silver hair was an easy landmark to spot when there are less people around. He sat under the shade of a tree, reading a thick book as usual. She didn't even need to ask, it was a textbook on silhouette knights.

Ady walked to his side, but Eru didn't seem to notice. When he is engrossed in a book, Eru will be totally absorbed and not pay attention to his surroundings. Ady sat down beside him, staring at his profile intensely. His blue eyes with long lashes gazing down at the book. His hair flowing down along his face, shining brightly in the

sun. His lips tightly shut, reflecting his intense passion.

(Eru is cute as usual...)

Ady giggled 'hehe' happily and was preparing to pounce on him, but she was stopped by an image in her mind. The memories from the dueling incident.

When Eru rescued Ady when she was kidnapped by Baltsar, he had carried her princess-style to the arena in the middle of the crowd. She didn't pay any heed to this as her mind was filled with anger, but when Ady thought back, she discovered that it was a pretty embarrassing scene. Not just embarrassing, she remembered the joy of being rescued by Eru, and how it felt in his arms, Ady blushed from just being next to Eru.

(Hya, I thought about that again...)

Ady was glad that Eru didn't notice her feelings. Her complicated feelings were making her hesitant to hug Eru like before. Ady was unhappy with how she was acting and forcefully hugged Eru. Eru calmly greeted Ady who pounced on him suddenly and closed his book.

It might be strange, but Eru had been treated like a 'soft toy' by many others since a young age and was used to being hugged. And Ady was the one who started the 'hugging trend', so it was no surprise for Eru, but he noticed that Ady wasn't her usual self and tilted his head curiously.





Ady was troubled by her unexpected actions. Usually, she would stroke his hair while chatting with him. But when she hugged him this time, she could feel her heart drumming intensely, she couldn't do anything else. Ady buried her head into Eru's hair to hide her blushing expression from him.

(Wah... Why does it turn out this way! Oh no, I can't lift my head.)

Ady was too nervous and forgot that she could just let go. Eru was a bit surprised by her reaction and decided to keep reading his book since she was not moving.

(It feels like I am an idiot, give me some reaction!)

In a way, this nonsensical anger calmed her mind. Ady poked Eru's cheek angrily.

"Hey, please go poke someone else's cheek."

"...So cute!"

Ady regained her normal demeanor. Eru felt more comfortable to hug than usual, and she started to caress his head. The two of them didn't realize it, but a few students in the garden were enjoying the sight of the pretty black-haired girl and silver-haired girl(?) playing around. That's how their daily life continued, every day was peaceful.

## **Summary for Knight's and Magic School Arc**

In an unnamed world not yet fully explored by its inhabitants, there exists the continent Zetterlund.

The eastern and western regions separated by the Aubigne mountain range.

It's eastern region inhabited by the kingdom of Fremmevira. At its capital, there is an academy teaching knights.

At the arena, two knights piloting giant robots known as Silhouette Knights, an instructor is observing them.

Kurata Tsubasa, newly reborn, approaches his father accompanied by his mother. Kurata is now known as Ernesti and he is focused on the Silhouette Knights dueling. He inherited his mother's features. He then becomes abnormally focused on Silhouette Knights and decided to devote his second life towards this, to pilot a Silhouette Knight and become a knight. Since he was obsessed about robots in his previous life.

At home, he asks his parents how to become a knight. His father tells him to study magic first.

His mother teaches him magic. Thanks to his matured mind, he is able to easily learn at a faster pace than other children.

The process of casting magic is similar to programming, since he was a professional programmer, he is able to cast a basic spell. But suddenly collapses due to lack of mana. After learning about limits of mana and how to increase it, he vows to train hard.

The next day, Eru begins his special training and used a physical boost spell but failed. He then sought to improve it and continues training.

When Eru reached the age of 8, he's already begun advancing his special training by jumping on the roofs of the city at night using physical boost spells. Focusing on mobility and training without rest and without interacting with children at his age.

On one such night, he encounters two children at one roof. Archid and Adeltrud. When he jumped off the roof, the two are amazed and admired him. The next night, Eru encounters them again. They plead

with Eru to train them as well. Adeltrud becomes infatuated with Eru's appearance being cute and similar after his mother. Eru accepts. The next day, the twins, Ady and Chid visit Eru's house. Eru's mother greets them warmly and then later, Eru teaches the twins. He made new friends and his life got livelier.

Due to the existence of demonic beasts, walls have been erected to protect the city. It's often a spot where children played together. One day, several children tease a slow dwarf child named Batson then ran away. Eru, Chid, and Ady were around then Eru wanted to play a prank. The twins grab Batson and they chased after the children. They launch Batson at them, hitting them hard and destroying several boxes. Batson gets enrage and chases after them, leaving the children there to take the blame. Batson soon gives up chasing after getting tired. They arrive at his house, his father's workshop.

After a small tour, Eru asks Batson to create a staff. He returns home to create the design, and entrusts it to Batson.

Batson makes the Winchester Rifle. Pleased with it, Eru wanted another one built since they greatly enhanced and influenced Eru's fighting style.

At the age of 8 and a half, Eru received a letter to enroll at Laihiala Academy. He's troubled since he wants to be a knight runner. After consulting his family and friends, he remembered his height is too small to pilot a Silhouette Knight. His mother apologized since he takes after her in appearance and height but Eru denied it and decided to create a Silhouette Knight himself.

When the time came for the academy to welcome new students, Eru and his friends enter. When they started to eat at the cafeteria, they meet Chid and Ady's half-sister, Stefania Serrati. She develops a fondness for Eru hear. She introduces herself being acquainted with Eru. Eru notices that Chid and Ady act strange.

Later, the twins confide to Eru about their family troubles, and their cruel brother and step-mother.

The next day, they formally begin classes. Eru notices at the time table a class that allowed him to study about Silhouette Knights however another class is in his way. He gets determined to get it out of his way. When the day for Fundamental Magic class begins, he

asks the teacher to allow him to skip his class if he proves his ability to be far superior to the rest. Although doubtful, he's given a chance, he shows off an overwhelming display of magical prowess, using an advanced spell without difficulty. Chid and Ady follow suit as the class is amazed at their performance, somewhat reluctantly the teacher gives her permission.

Later, Eru encounters Stefania who shows a fondness for Eru when Ady appears, they chat about his cuteness, troubling Eru. The bell rings later and they head to class. Chid encounters Baltsar later on, his and Ady's half-brother.

After two years, their lifestyles remain the same. Eru forcibly used his abilities to be exempted from classes to attend those he wants to attend. While Chid and Ady duel using dual magic and swordplay. Stefania watches in amazement as the two display abilities unthinkable for children their age. Baltsar secretly observes the duel and retreats.

Expressing frustration due to being inferior in terms of abilities in comparison towards Chid and Ady, Baltsar plots to dispose of them. The next day, Baltsar corners Ady with his lackeys and they capture her. Baltsar challenges Chid later on while holding Ady's hair pin.

Baltsar beats Chid mercilessly, leaving Chid to count on Eru.

Eru encounters Stefania while looking for Chid. Stefania informs Eru of Baltsar plot and this enrages Eru. He searched for Ady and relentlessly crushed the lackeys guarding her. He takes her and rushes to where Chid is.

Chid is severely beaten when Eru appears with Ady. Chid gets serious and mercilessly beats Baltsar. The audience understood Baltsar's scheme after seeing Ady. His lackeys take him away and Eru consults Stefania to deal with everything else later.

A few days later, Baltsar was severely warned by the school and his family and was sent to the Red Rhino Knights for reformation. Eru and Ady play and chat as usual while Ady develops feelings for Eru. Life is peaceful for Eru and his friends.

**Demon Beast Attack Arc**

## **Knight's & Magic Vol 1 Chapter 5**



In the past, humans only ruled half of Zetterlund continent, with the eastern land beyond the Aubigne mountain range being uncharted grounds dominated by demon beasts.

With the silhouette knights as their main force, humanity pushed the demon beasts back and ventured into the east beyond the Aubigne mountains. The humans were doing well in the beginning, but their invasion grinded to a halt. The east of Aubigne was covered by the Bocuse Sea of Trees, with demon beasts that could take on hundreds of silhouette knights lurking inside. Suffering huge losses, the humans retreated out of the forest.

There were vast plains of land at the foot of Aubigne mountain which was suitable for agricultural use after some development. To protect this piece of land, they expanded their territory to the edge of the forest and formed a country. This was the story behind the founding of Fremmevira kingdom. There are still demon beast wandering in the Bocuse forest that might appear on a whim. To keep the demon beasts away, walls were erected along the borders, and fortresses were set up at the place where demon beasts show up most frequently... The entrance to the Bocuse forest known as the 'Rabidly Road' (Demon Beast Highway). Castle walls were then erected between such fortresses. As it was physically impossible to cover the whole border with siege walls, they could not completely deter demon beasts that approach from places not covered by siege walls. The siege walls were mainly effective against titanic demon beasts, and thanks to the nation's defensive efforts, the kingdom remained relatively safe.

This happened during a certain quiet night.

Balguerrie stronghold was one of the fortresses lying between the forest and the borders of Fremmevira Kingdom. It was quite far from 'Rabidly Road', even visits from mid size demon beast were rare, an outpost guarded by ten silhouette knights.



That night, the guards on duty felt there was something wrong with the unusual silence in the Bocuse forest. The stars sparkled brightly in the night sky. There was usually a couple of howls from demon beast on a night like this, but instead, there was an unnatural stillness. They couldn't even feel the presence of the animals, as if they had all evacuated. Although it was unnatural, there was no indication of anything happening. Baffled, they continued to do their rounds.

The silence did not last long. They heard the sound of trees being crushed in the distance. It was obvious that something was approaching... Demon beasts. The guards raised the alarm without hesitation.

"What the hell, a demon beast so late at night!?"

"We're from the Rabidly Road, what is it doing so far in the countryside?"

The knights in the fortress prepared themselves when the alarm horn sounded. The outpost was a hive of activity as they mustered together their equipment with haste. Listening to the sound of trees being crushed, the men could feel the crisis looming. The knight runners on duty jumped into their silhouette knights. The silhouette knights deployed at this fortress were the standard 'Karrdator' model of Fremmevira. The ether reactor was forcefully started from a dormant state, its hum reverberating around it.

The silhouette knights checked through their start up procedures and speedily gathered at the gate of the fortress. At this time, the thing that had been crushing trees appeared. The demon beast was like a small moving mountain, covered in an uneven shell of rocks like a porcupine. A head and four limbs protruded from the sides, so the shape resembled a tortoise, an eighty meter long and fifty meter tall tortoise.

The guard on duty on the wall had only seen an 'Emperor Tortoise' in books... a type of demon beast known as 'Behemoth'. Its primary features were its toughness and endurance. With its reputation of being a walking citadel, it was a difficult enemy to handle. To put it simply, the behemoth's greatest power was 'Strengthening'. It uses overwhelming mana output to maintain its strengthening spell, and support a physically impossible body structure. It also enables it to move with a speed contrary to its appearance and hardening every part of its body from shell to skeleton, possessing incredible toughness. It is said that a behemoth mainly uses body slam to attack and can shatter siege walls. Its 'heart', which is proportionate with its large body, can generate mana equivalent to over 100 silhouette knights. With its endless endurance, the defense of the behemoth is almost impossible to break through. This was a behemoth, a fortress like demon beast with incredibly high defense.

"Demon beast identified... It's an 'Emperor Tortoise'...! A behemoth!"

Before the pilots could process the guards screaming report, behemoth slammed into the walls of the stronghold. Its intentions were unknown as the behemoth attacked the fortress from the front. Using the body weight and the toughness that the behemoth took pride in, the demon beast turned itself into a battering ram. The siege wall and gate made of iron and stone was destroyed with one hit, the debris splattering all over. The minds of the pilots witnessing this scene turned blank.

After hearing the reports of the guard and the destruction to the stronghold, the pilot's faces showed shock and awe. Who would have known that a battalion-level demon beast would show up at a place so far away from rabidly road? A battalion-level demon beast requires a battalion of silhouette knights (about 300) to defeat it. But there was only a squad (9) of silhouette knights stationed at this outpost, ten silhouette knights if you include the captain. This was enough to keep duel-level demon beasts (equal to 1 silhouette knight in power) in check but was overwhelmingly weak compared to

a battalion-level demon beast.

It would be suicidal to take a stand against the demon beast, but the knight runners did not waver. They did not know why the behemoth was heading into the kingdom of Fremmevira, but if they allowed it to push through without warning headquarters, the result would be disastrous. It was impossible to stop a behemoth with the forces stationed at stronghold Balguerie, but if they stalled for time, they may find the weak spot of the beast. They hardened their resolve and charged forward bravely.

With the walls breached, the behemoth broke down the remnants of the gate and walked into the stronghold. Its howl shook the fortress like an explosion.

The squad of Karrdators moved with this cue, pointing their silhouette arms, 'Culverin', at the behemoth. The knight's channeled their mana into the spear shaped weapons, the emblem graph converted it into a physical phenomenon. Magic scripts and mana beyond the capability of humans to process were activated, forming overed spells. Flames erupted from the tips of the spear and scored direct hits on the beast with an explosive sound, burning it with a pillar of fire. Normal beasts would have fallen under this attack, but the behemoth lived up to its name of a moving fortress and was completely unfazed by the strike. But this was within the expectations of the Karrdators, and they continued the onslaught of flames with their culverins, covering the beast in smoke and fire.

The power of the silhouette arms was strong, but the expenditure of mana was very intensive. All the Karrdators kept up the attack until their mana reserves were depleted. To replenish their mana pool, they revved their ether reactor to absorb ether from the air. The reactor moaned louder as it worked even harder.

The entrance of the stronghold was blazing in a sea of fire after the continuous assault by the silhouette knights. The crackling flames

and smoke shrouded the behemoth completely and the knights lost track of the beast. There were merely ten silhouette knights, but even a battalion level beast should sustain some injury under their all out attack. Just when the pilots were thinking about that, a howl made the earth shudder, the shock wave dispersed the flames, and the behemoth appeared from behind the smoke. Reality betrayed their wishful thinking, the behemoth's gigantic body was unscathed.

The behemoth rushed towards the squads of Karrdators with a momentum that didn't match its size, the speed was so fast the Karrdators could not evade it in time. The silhouette knights were down after receiving a solid blow. The steel plates caved in an instant and the limbs were smashed. The sparkling crystal shards flew out from the gaps between the armor. There was no way the knight runners survived.

The other Karrdators fell back, keeping a distance from the beast. The behemoth attacked with a deceptively quick pace, knocking away the Karrdator who could only fire off a flame bullet in futile resistance.

The remaining Silhouette knights judged that their magic attacks are ineffective and surrounded the behemoth, attacking with swords. But just as the rumors said, the shell covering the behemoth was unbelievably hard, negating all of the slashing attacks. Even though its whole body was covered by the shell, the behemoth was still able to move with amazing speed. Just ten silhouette knights wouldn't be able to buy time and would be in danger of being wiped out by the behemoth. The surviving pilots felt an unspeakable terror run down their spine, this was indeed a battalion-level demon beast. The captain of the silhouette knights made a snap decision.

"Arlo, Benjamin, Claes! Are you still alive?"

"...Yes sir!"

The behemoth went on a rampage again, slamming its body into the fortress with the force that it used to charged at the Karrdators. The stone-made stronghold was falling apart, it wouldn't last much longer.

"Arlo evacuate all the people who are still alive and run to Carriere fortress! Benjamin alert all the neighboring cities that the behemoth is nearby, and rush to Jantunen! Claes, make for the capital! Run at top speed, run till you grind the crystal tissue to dust, you must report this to the capital!"

The captain turned the head of his machine and looked at his remaining subordinates.

"The rest of you... Sorry, you drew the short straw."

The three pilots belonged to the younger generation, the reason behind their nominations were unknown, but they had no authority to refuse or hesitate. The top priority was to stay alive and deliver the warnings, there was no time for them to bid farewell. A tinge of sadness flashed across their faces, but they regained their spirit through determination and their sense of duty.

"Go!"

"Yes sir!"

The young pilots left the front lines on their Karrdators without hesitation. After the captain confirmed the situation through his holo monitor, the corner of his lips rose in a smile.

"My brothers, we will be knocked away if we stay in this cramped space! We are abandoning the stronghold. Go outside and use stalling tactics!"

"Hey hey, we won't let you come into our kingdom!"

"Let's show this damn tortoise what we're made of!"

The five Karrdators escaped from the stronghold, preparing to fight the behemoth. This was a hopeless battle, but their movements were clean and crisp. The behemoth razed the stronghold to the ground and started its attack again. The Karrdators used a series of coordinated attacks to impede its advance, but the range magic attacks cast at random couldn't stop the movement of the giant beast. They would need to use melee attacks eventually, striking the head and legs before running away. The hit and run tactics were repeated again and again. The Karrdators could only focus on dodging the enraged behemoth as they fought on.

But even silhouette knights had a limit to their energy.

Silhouette knights are equipped with ether reactors, a semi-automatic part that supplies mana by absorbing the ether in the atmosphere. But the supply rate is limited. Especially in battle, if the usage rate is higher than the supply rate, the mana reserves in the machine will get gradually smaller. The pilots were only human... both man and machine have their limits. With the depletion of the mana reserves, the sluggish Karrdators were sent flying. The loss of focus due to fatigue caused the Karrdators to miss the chance to evade and was smashed by a tail attack. One by one, the knights fell to the demon beast.

But the five silhouette knights managed to buy a few hours of time that were more precious than gold, while facing off a battalion-level demon beast. It was only right to see this as the victory of their iron will.

The one who held on to the very end was the veteran captain. The machine was full of countless scratches, the right hand was blown away by the swipe of the behemoth's tail. The crystal tissue was in tatters due to damage as well as wear and tear, the mana reserve

was on its last legs, he couldn't even run away.

"... The rookies have escaped... This fucking turtle, next up won't be a half ass group like us, but a standard order of knights. Prepare to be history."

Since he couldn't escape, the captain commanded the damaged machine to run. He never thought he would survive, injecting his remaining mana into his command Silhouette knight and charging at the behemoth recklessly. But the best it could do was stagger forward in awkward steps. He tightened the grip of the sword in the left arm and threw the whole weight of the machine in a stab at the face of the behemoth.

Maybe the demon beast knew the concept of respect.

The Behemoth locked on to the last enemy blocking its path, opened its mouth and took a deep breath. This was a never before seen attack. After a beat, just before the sword of the command silhouette knight reached the behemoth, a tornado breath powered by magic spewed from the behemoth's mouth. The fierce wind uprooted the trees. The command silhouette knight took a direct hit and was blown far away, the crystal shards and pieces of armor raining over the forest.

The behemoth growled. The squad launched many attacks in their stalling tactic, and with the command silhouette knight's last blow, a faint crack was left upon the behemoth's face, lightly scratching the eye ball. If the damage of the command silhouette knight wasn't so severe, it might have hit the eye ball. The behemoth surveyed the area for a while and started advancing after making sure those in its way were gone. Its footfall was heavy and its eyes bore no sign of emotion.

The largest demon beast calamity since the founding of Fremmevira started quietly. What was its goal? The answer lay in the road the

demon beast was heading down, the largest city of central  
Fremmevira... Jantunen.



## **Knight's & Magic Vol 1 Chapter 6**

== CE 1277.

The 12 year old Ernesti Echevalier and his childhood friends, the twins Archid Olter and Adeltrud Olter has moved on to middle school of knighthood faculty. Their other childhood playmate, the dwarf Batson Termonen, remained in the crafting faculty. Due to the influence of Eru, Batson has shown interest in the career of knightsmith. The two of them can sometimes be seen together, talking about Silhouette Knights design and operation knowledge.

As for Ernesti, he has been taking classes about Silhouette Knights but unrelated to knighthood ever since he enrolled in Laihiala pilot academy. Eru has completed all the courses in the crafting faculty after attending their classes for 3 years. After satisfying his thirst for knowledge with them, he is now unofficially attending pilot faculty classes.

Since Laihiala is a 'pilot' academy, piloting faculty is the star of the institute. Only the best graduates from knighthood middle school may gain entry into piloting faculty. Although it is known generally as the piloting faculty, but not everyone enrolled here has knighthood background. The knight runner alone won't be able to move the Silhouette knight, it is still a machine that requires crews to maintain and service it.

The pilots will learn about control and maneuver. The craftsman learns to construct and maintain the outer skin as well as the inner skeleton. The alchemist trains in the art of crystal tissue creation and repair. The sigilmancers focus on the preparation of the silhouette arms. The various faculties in middle school are collectively known as pilot faculty in high school.

With this background, the education policy of the pilot academy

trends towards practical application. They familiarize themselves with the skills and techniques by piloting the Silhouette Knights owned by the academy. Laihiala pilot academy possesses 20 Silhouette Knights, a number that is more than adequate to man a fortified outpost on the front lines. But they are the retired models Salodrea machines that are 2nd rated in abilities.

These Silhouette knights have been repaired countless times over the long years and each of them are used by several piloting candidates for training. The repeated usage has worn down the machine and it requires frequent maintenance checks, a heavy burden on the students, but also great experience for real world application. Organization hiring piloting faculty alumni comments that the fresh graduates have the ability to work on the frontlines immediately.

On the training ground of Laihiala pilot academy, a mock battle between Silhouette Knights is ongoing.

In the middle of the building made from stone, a red machine is engaged in battle with a white machine. They have blunt sword used for training spar n their hands, battling fiercely. The machine provided by the school has reinforced armour around the pilot seats, a design which focus on the safety of the pilots. But a Silhouette Knight going all out is still very dangerous, so the equipment is nerfed to restrict its damage. Standard equipment is only used in practical training battles against demon beast.

There are no empty seats on the wall surrounding the arena. All sorts of people are watching the duelling Silhouette Knights from the spectators seats. Training with only brawls is not real training; the analysis of the fight is indispensable. There are people recording the battle logs, studying the skills of the pilots... some are allocating maintenance spare parts as the damage piles on; some of them are observing the effects of the magic arsenal.

Most of the people present are high school students, but there is a small figure that is out of place here. Not only is the person short, he also has a cute face that is easily mistaken for a girl. That person is Ernesti. Because his stature is small, he is occupying the front seat so his vision won't be obscured by others, staring at the Silhouette Knights intensely.

He skipped the knighthood faculty classes he is supposed to attend, overcoming all obstacles to earn the right to be exempted. He is unorthodox in his actions, but is strangely law abiding in some areas.

In the beginning, Eru uses his cute appearance and mascot like feel to gain entry. He was planning to watch quietly from the side, but he is now observing the battles and repairs up close, finding more places he can chip in. From the way he can easily keep up with the conversations of his seniors, his preparation in the last 3 years did not go to waste.

Getting practical first-hand experience and knowledge outside the classroom made Eru extremely happy. Apart from greedily taking part in all sorts of work processes, he is very interested in the training battles. The Silhouette knights -- giant robots fighting before his eyes draws out indescribable emotions within him. The giant machines that emulate a knight in armour bash at each other with iron limbs wielding mammoth swords, even shooting powerful projectile spells. Eru observes the training battles with passionate eyes, not missing any single movement.

Side tracking a bit, there was a rumor that a guy was almost pulled into a twisted world after seeing the pretty boy who can be mistaken for a girl blushing while watching the Silhouette Knights with longing eyes.

"Eh, seems like Di will lose again."

Piloting faculty student... Helvi Öberg mumbles as she records the

battle logs, a breeze blowing across the arena messes her short and curly hair.

The situation of the battle before them is clear, the red knight is struggling. It's dual wielding blades and on the offensive, but it didn't break through the white knight's defense.

"Hmm, what do you think about this battle, Eru?"

Helvi who has been glancing at the data in her hands asked Eru who was sitting obediently besides her. Their vision remains fixed on the arena at all times.

"The speed of Guyale's sword is slower than before. I think that is the reason he missed the opportunity to score points off attacks."

"... I see. Now that you mentioned it, his attacks seem too casual. I thought the condition of the knight runner is not too good. What went wrong?"

"The movement of the right arm seems sluggish. I think it is because the joints or crystal tissues have been replaced."

Helvi browses through the documents in her hand and confirms the maintenance report of the red machine named Guyale. The record states, due to signs of stress and fatigue in the crystal tissues of the right arm, it has been replaced this morning. The movement probably seems rigid because the parts are not aligned. She found the reason behind the sluggish actions of Guyale, but she can't tell that that the condition of the right arm is bad. Helvi moans Eru's passion and attention to detail when watching training battles is better than those actively engaged in it. She found it amazing and wonders where his passion stems from. The white machine fighting Guyale in the arena, Earlecumber, fended off the attack and stab at the Guyale's chest. The horn sounded, signalling the end of the battle. The instructor judged that the spar has been won by

Earlecumber. Guyale can't overcome its bad condition in this battle.

The machine that was battling just now enters the workshop situated near the arena and the pilots exited the Silhouette Knights.

The pilot of the white Earlecumber was Edgar C Blanche, a tall and dignified man. Similar to his appearance, he is matured and steadfast, an elite among the pilots.

The red Guyale is manned by Dietrich Cunitz. Unlike Edgar, he has long blonde hair, a meek and skinny man. His abilities are top notch, but he tends to get nervous and loses his head easily over small issues, his performance is inconsistent. He seems frustrated because he lost the match.

He started squabbling with the maintenance crew the moment he got off the machine. Instead of discussing the issue, they are pushing the blame of the loss around, even the bystanders know they won't make any headway. Helvi can't stand it and butts in. She explained her findings about the arms to settle this meaningless quarrel. But Dietrich's expression lit up mid-way and smiles sarcastically. In contrast, the maintenance crew looks annoyed.

"Oh, no wonder the movement is so rigid. Maintenance is skimping on the repairs."

Dietrich is suggesting 'losing is not my fault'. Edgar standing nearby advises him sternly:

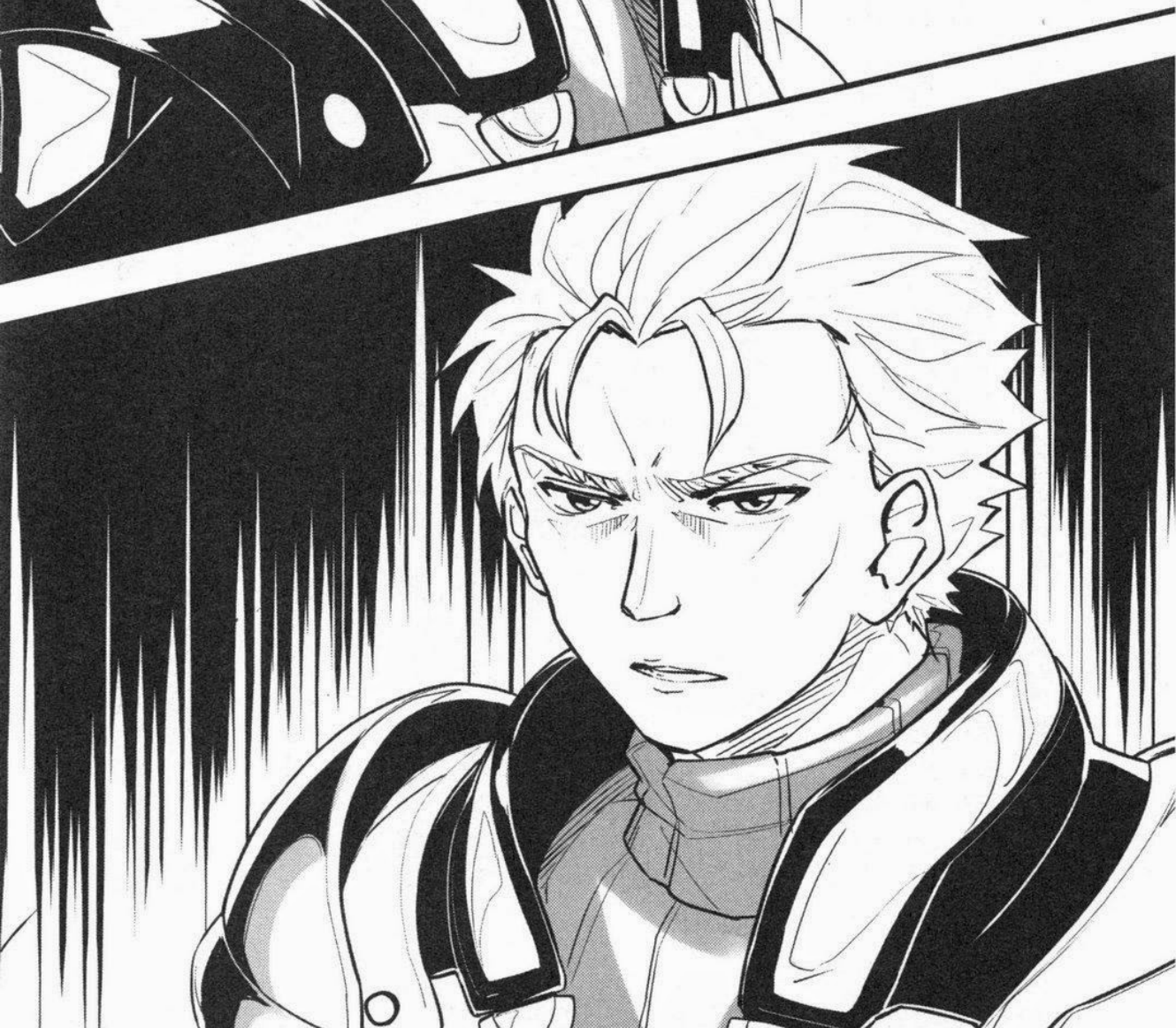
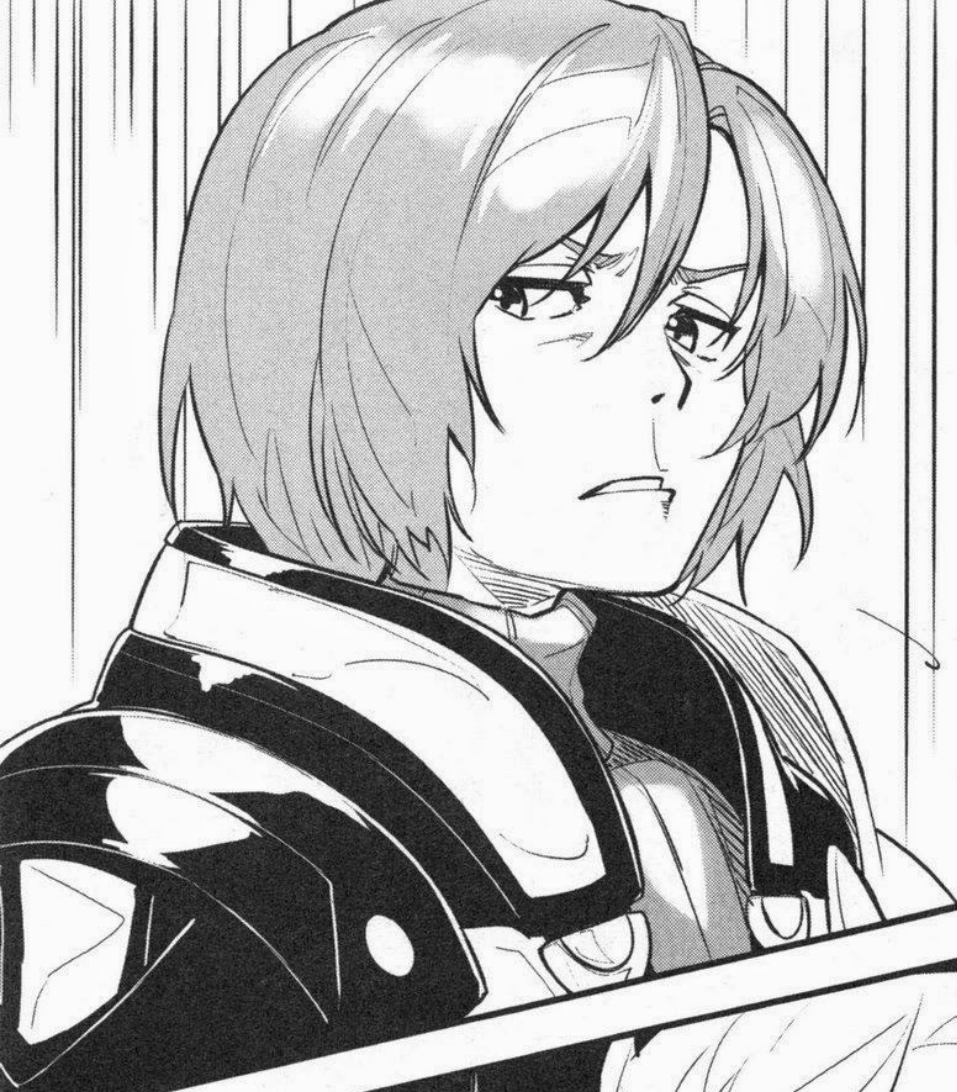
"Di, that's going too far. If the arm is not functioning well, you should adopt a different style in your fight. Its fine if you lose after trying that out, but your movement seems unfocused today. It is not right to blame it all on the maintenance crew."

Dietrich's sarcastic smile disappears after being lectured in front of everyone.

"You only won because my machine's performance is sub-par, don't get cocky."

"The content of the spar is more important than winning. I am just saying that you should reflect on that."

"Is that so? Why don't you operate a faulty machine in our fight next time?"



Dietrich left in angry strides after uttering these words with a sour face. The people in the work shop have gotten used to this and simply shrug. Eru who was watching from the side-lines made a perplexed face and Helvi pat his head for some reason. The school bell rang, announcing the end of class and to start preparing for the next lesson. Eru was unhappy that the fun time is over, but still bowed to Helvi and rush backed to the knighthood faculty.

"Field trip?"

Eru have no idea what his classmates in middle school is talking about, there seems to be some events. He must have missed something if the whole class is talking about it. Probably because he is spending so much time in pilot school.

"I'm sorry, I have no idea. Can you tell me what this is about?"

Eru said with a troubled expression. His classmates look at each other for an instant, and all of them started explaining at the same time. Maybe they enjoy talking to Eru, or they felt excited when speaking with Eru. It requires tremendous patience to summarize the jumbled contents, but it can be filtered down to these main points.

- In order to accumulate practical experience in fighting demon beast, all 3 grade year of knighthood middle school will be participating in a field trip.
- The destination will be the region of Jantunen, the forested hill home to small demon beast.
- The first years will be focusing on the basics of camping and wilderness survival skills.
- For safety, pilot school will be sending several Silhouette Knights as escorts.

"I see, it will be conducted 2 weeks from now."



"Hey, did you only found out about it today?"

"That's what I thought. You keep going~~ to high school right? You didn't come~~ back much anyway."

Eru tilt his head perplex. Chid seems shocked, but Ady looks unhappy. Eru has been reporting to piloting faculty during class and after class, the time he spent training with Chid and Ady have been dwindling.

"Ady? Are you in a bad mood?"

"Not~~ really. Totally not. You are mistaken right?"

But the way Ady is crossing her arms and her strong tone seems to be announcing 'I am very unhappy'.

"I don't think I did anything wrong. What did I do?"

"That's right~~ you didn't do anything. You are not here most of the time anyway~~"

This is what a hopeless situation means. Eru have no idea what to do and request Chid for aid with his gaze. Chid seems to acknowledge that and changed the topic forcefully.

"We will split into teams for the field trip. Eru, which group are you joining?"

"Ah, about this..."

Eru glance at Ady who can't hide her curiosity and said:

"If there are no special arrangements, I would prefer forming a group with the 3 of us. From the sound of it, the first years will be concentrating on the basics, so grouping up casually should be fine."

"Oh-- we will be staying together then..."

Ady's mood has obviously turned better. She went behind Eru and put her arms around his neck in a hug like usual.

(No matter how old I am, I don't get women...)

Including the memories from his past life, Eru looks at Ady with his wealth of life experience and felt a chill. About 2 weeks later, Ernesti and the others prepares to go on their field trip under the clear blue skies.

Large communal horse drawn carriages are parked in front of Laihiala pilot academy. The middle school students load onto the carriages under the direction of the instructors.

"Take care of yourself--"

Batson from craftsman faculty is not participating in the field trip. The knighthood trio walks towards the carriage after Batson bid them farewell in a nonchalant tone.

"Eru Eru, this way!"

"Don't rush; the carriage won't leave without us."

The destination of the field trip is a place called 'Cloquet's Forest'. That place is covered in forest and is slightly elevated, filled with demon beasts that are relatively weak. Carriages are used for the long trip after considering the power level of the demon beast. Cloquet's Forest is a suitable place that meets the requirement of the field trip. According to the planned route, they will swing by Jantunen for resupply before heading into Cloquet's Forest which is nearby.

After all the students are seated, the carriages set off one by one. The long caravan of carriages advance steadily on the road.

The 10 Silhouette Knight escorts are spread out along the convoy. They are piloted by the high schoolers from the academy. The dark red and pure white machine, Guyale and Earlecumber are here too.

The Silhouette Knights used by the academy are donated from the military. After the long years of maintenance by the students with free reign, their shape has become unique and interesting. Some have meaningless and complicated patterns engraved on its armour, others have eerily big accessories added onto its head, and there are armours that are pieced together in a weird pattern. The machines have been customized deeply, giving a 'that's too exaggerated' kind of feeling. The exoskeleton comes in all sorts of colours, having an elegant air about it instead of being fierce and mean.

There are many knighthood majors participating in the field trip. Although middle school is full of kids, they are still candidates striving to be knights, so there shouldn't be any problem if they meet normal demon beast attacks. Even if this is a field trip, they can't be spooked by small demon beasts. Within the Kingdom of Fremmevira, mid-sized demon beast about a dozen meters still lurks in the forest and mountain regions, and they might run into them on the road. The Silhouette Knights are the insurance against unexpected attacks.

"I thought we will have a chance to fight demon beasts, but it turns out to be a boring trip."

Dietrich Cunitz who is riding in Guyale complains loudly. Although they are here as a safeguard, there have been no major incidence on this road for the past several years. Although the knight runners have been assigned the mission of 'long distance manoeuvre training', this is a trip that has nothing to do with tension or

motivation.

"Hey, I know how you feel Di, but you can't say such things."

Helvi Öberg who is piloting the Silhouette Knight 'Trandorches' instead of working as a battle logger reminds him. There are microphones inside the pilot seat, the sound inside will be broadcast loudly through external speakers if it is not turned off. It is amplified to ensure the message is not drowned out by the noise of the Silhouette Knights in operation, so it is possible that a middle schooler might have heard him.

"Both of you take this seriously. Even if nothing happens, this is still part of the training."

Earlecumber caught up to Guyale and Trandorches, the voice of Edgar C Blanche can be heard booming from the Silhouette Knight.

"As expected from the top pilot, such high end content."

"Di, didn't you hear what I said?"

"Ah -- keep it down you two, everyone can hear you."

Guyale and Earlecumber fell silent after hearing Helvi and returned to their positions. Helvi felt uneasy about the days ahead while she pilots Trandorches.

They are not the only ones who don't know how to kill time.

"I know it can't be help, but this is too boring."

After rocking in the carriage for about half a day, Chid is bored out of his mind. Not only Chid, the students around him are feeling the same. They are 4 days away from the destination, and with their transportation taken care of by the carriage, the students on board

have lots of free time. They can talk freely, but they are growing tired of the cramped space on the carriage, which can't be helped.

"Do you want to look at the scenery outside? The scenery outside is interesting."

"No, the only one who is satisfied watching the scenery is you. And you are really tenacious, how long do you plan to watch that?"

Chid looks at Eru with tired eyes. Eru stops gazing at the scenery and turns back, sitting properly on his seat. He looks really cute with his head slightly tilted and deep in thought, relieving the atmosphere instantly.

"Want to read the books I brought along? I think you can kill some time this way."

"Books... I want to stretch my body. Eh, never mind. What have you got?"

"Theories on Alchemy, volume 1."

"Is that a textbook? Isn't it better to sleep than read that?"

"You are right, but there is really nothing to do here. Why not follow Ady and take a nap?"

Ady is sleeping soundly in front of Chid. Her peaceful face that has nothing to do with boredom made Chid look to the sky. He maintained that position and suddenly thought of something.

"Eh, it's a great way to kill time right?"

They climb onto the top of the carriage. The top is full of luggage of the students. Unlike the inside of the carriage, there are no seats here, but there are no problems sitting down.

"The scenery here is better."

The carriage advanced leisurely under the clear blue skies, the top of the carriage feels nice and peaceful. A breeze made Eru's silver hair sways. He found a nice seat among the luggage and entered scenery appreciation mode.

"Ah-- this is still boring. But it is nicer than the cramp inner carriage."

Since there is nothing to do, napping under the sky sounds interesting. Chid doesn't care anymore.

"Ah, so you guys are here."

Ady pokes her head out from within the carriage.

"You woke up?"

"Yeah, you guys are gone when I got up."

Ady made her way to Eru's side as she speaks, and lay on his thigh, getting in position to sleep.

"The sun is so warm, it feels better sleeping here."

"Sleeping is fine, but why are you using my lap as your pillow?"

"It's feels nicer this way."

As Eru was at a loss, Ady has begun her journey into dream land. Eru can't do anything about her and started reading, looking out at the scenery occasionally. Chid ponders about stuff for a while, but thinks it's too bothersome and gave up, using a luggage as a pillow to nap.

Their leisurely journey continues at this pace. After rocking for 3 days on the horse drawn carriage, the group from Laihiala pilot academy finally arrives at the largest city of central Fremmevira -- Jantunen.

There is a reason why Jantunen ranks amongst the top cities in the kingdom. It lies along the route that leads to the west of Fremmevira and beyond the Aubigne mountain range. It is also the transit point for supplies leading to the frontline fortress to the east of Fremmevira. As an important transport hub, its defences are second only to the capital, surrounded by siege walls and moats. On top of that, there is a large band of knights equivalent to a company (100 Silhouette Knights) garrisoned here. No matter how crucial this city is, this is too much military forces for one city. But they are stationed here because of Jantunen's strategic location, allowing them to reinforce front line cities quickly. And in practice, about 30 percent of the forces will receive patrol and escort missions outside the city.

By the time the convoy from Laihiala pilot academy arrived at Jantunen, it is already past noon.

The city wall surrounding Jantunen is colossal in scale. Because of the existence of demon beast, traveling long distance is difficult, so this is first time seeing another big city other than Laihiala for many of the students. Everyone is curious about this city and this is the most anticipated part for many of them.

"What an amazing wall, what are they defending against?"

"The enemy they have in mind is demon beast... or rather, the demon beast during the nation's founding. There are many more vicious demon beasts during that era."

"Oh... That's why it is so massive."

The students were elated when they saw the gate leading into the city. But the carriage did not pass through the gates, but are gathered in the open space in front of it.

"Wait, aren't we going into Jantunen?"

"They already told us that the stop at Jantunen is only to resupply."

Although the group can disembark and rest outside the carriage, but they will need to move out once the goods have been loaded. The students who thought they can get a reprieve from the dull journey start to complain, the twins stare at the gargantuan gate and nags.

"Man, this is boring. It won't do any harm letting us in for a while!"

"That's right, I want to go shopping."

"Wait, that's not why..."

"Don't you want to take a look?"

"I am interested, but going on a tour with such a large group of students can turn into a horrible mess."

As they spoke, Eru looks to the side. It was probably arranged before time, the merchants came out of the gate with the goods which are then loaded up the carriage.

The short break was over and it was time to go. The carriage left with the reluctant students on board and move towards their destination -- Cloquet's Forest.

After traveling for a day from Jantunen, They reached Cloquet's Forest. The road that leads to the east of the kingdom was badly



maintained. After rocking in the carriage for the whole day, they finally reach the entrance of a thick forest.

The caravan parked in an open space near the entrance of the forest, the base camp for annual field trips.

The students started setting up tents under the command of the instructors. They have been sleeping on the carriage on their journey here, ready to escape in a moment's notice if demon beast attacks. But they will be training for several days here and can't stay on the carriage indefinitely. So they erected tents and used this base as a camp site.

The seniors experienced this several times and set up their tents skillfully. In the knighthood faculty, besides normal training, camping trips are also conducted once in a while. Since they aspire to be knights, setting up camp is a necessary skill when traveling in an army. Learning skills other than sword and magic is a unique feature of those majoring in knighthood. But it is not easy for the first years. Although they learned and practiced before the trip, their inexperience still shows in their work. Even with the assistance of the instructors, there are a few teams that slowed down progress, so dinner was served very late.

The entrance of the forest was filled with tents just like a camping zone. There are torches all around, illuminating the dark corner of the forest. As part of their training program, the 2nd years are assigned guard and patrol duties. With so many charges, the instructors can't take care of everyone, so the students are also posted as guards, which serve as practical assignments too.

Eru's team set up tent faster than the other groups. Eru knows the steps well, and with the tall twins helping, they finished in no time. The two of them helped the other groups after finishing while Eru walks to the outer edge of the camp site.

(The basics are all done. I am not being lazy... ah, found it.)

Besides the camping grounds of the middle school are the base of the high school knight runners and their Silhouette Knights. The footsteps of the Silhouette Knights and the hum of their internal components will disrupt the sleep of the campers. That's why they are stationed here in case of any emergencies.

The 10 Silhouette Knights are arranged in rows, in standby mode with one knee on the ground. Their colossal figures are partially illuminated by the camp fire. With some parts hidden in the darkness, they look more imposing in the night. Normal people might feel intimidation, but Eru simply smile as he looks at the rows of iron giants seated in a row.

(Ah, giant robots are great-- this is the oasis of the heart, every home should have one.)

There are no such terrifying families even in this world. But regretfully, no one is around to retort Eru.

"Hey, you there... silver hair? Is that Ernesti?"

After a short moment, someone called out to Eru who was immersed in a mysterious healing aura of robots. He turns back and saw the owner of Earlecumber -- Edgar.

"Evening Edgar-senpai. Sorry to disturb."

"So it is you. Why are... I guess it is pointless to ask."

Eru is famous in pilot school. His antics and motivation are well known too.

"Is senpai on standby duty?"

Edgar heard Eru's query as the flickering light from the camp fire shines over them. He smile bitterly and shakes his head.

"No, we were deciding the order of the duty but... sigh, Dee is making a scene as usual."

"Dietrich senpai?"

"Yes. Simply put, he was complaining about standby duty being a hassle. As knight runners in their senior year of Laihiala academy, protecting our juniors is an important mission... But as usual, his attitude is flippant."

He still has to carry out his task no matter how stubborn he is. But Dietrich still insists on nagging about it.

"I don't want to hear his complains, so I decided to change the mood and see these guys."

The two of them raise their head to look at 'them'. The campfire lit up the giant knight in white armour -- Silhouette Knight Earlecumber. It was not customized and retained its original shape. It's simple design has no special features and has a gentle feel about it. With the top pilot Edgar controlling it, the two partners are known as the strongest in pilot school.



"Senpai likes Silhouette Knights too?"

"Eh? Rather than like... they are my weapons and comrades. My mood will calm down when I am with them. When I feel frustrated like just now or when I feel tired, I will visit them."

I am probably not suited for this sort of talks -- Edgar scratches his head.

"I think having a reliable companion is wonderful."

"You really like Silhouette Knights. That's right, if you continue to work hard as a knight, you will gain a partner too... Ah, we chatted for too long, 1st years should get back before it gets too late."

And so, they bid their farewell and return.

"...Okay, Dee should have calmed down by now."

After watching the bright silver disappear into the darkness, Edgar mumbles to himself and prepares to head back with the spirit of heading into battle.

The sky is totally dark. The 1st years finish their late dinner in the dim lights and returned to their tents. The 1st years have no assignments for the night. After the long journey and setting up camp, fatigue sets in and they wrap themselves in their blankets and sleeps. When they have gone into slumber--

A loud howl from a beast came from deep within the forest. It was probably wolves. After the first howl, howls in response can be heard from all over the forest. The students on guard duty heighten their senses and looks towards the forest. The howls can be heard every now and then, so they lost interest in it after a while. But there are some who can't ignore the howls. It reminds the 1st timer the situation they are in. This is not a safe town or a carriage they

can run away on. This is right in front of the forest where demon beast lurks, they are sleeping in tents that were erected here.

Even though Cloquet's forest is not really dangerous, it is not considered safe even with the students on watch. After arriving here without incident, they felt the atmosphere was light along the way here, but grew tense because of that howl. Their sleepiness because of fatigue is gone and they are wide awake.

In Eru's team tent, Chid is shaking his head while lying down. Although he is not very affected, Chid still felt a bit uneasy and can't sleep.

(I thought I was braver than this, seems like I am quite tense too.)

The dim camp fire shines in, giving the dark tent an unsettling atmosphere. Chid suddenly wondered if Eru sleeping besides him was uneasy like him and called out softly.

"Hey Eru, I want to ask... Eh."

Eru is fast asleep. Eru was not totally unmoved, but he was a warrior on the front line of hell in his previous life too. He understands the importance of rest even if he doesn't want to, and gained the ability to be able to sleep under any circumstances.

(... Although I have known from the beginning, but he is too strong and carefree.)

After hearing Chid, Ady who can't sleep turns and stare at Eru's sleeping face.

"Eh, how cunning."

Chid doesn't know what she means by cunning. Ady shifted over and pulls Eru into her arms, hugging him like a pillow. Eru woke after

being hugged this way. He realizes it is Ady, pats her head and falls asleep. Maybe Ady felt safe because of this and her breathing turns smooth after a moment. Looking at the two of them, Chid felt foolish for not being able to sleep.

(Isn't it stupid for me to be tense alone?)

That's it, he decided to not worry anymore. After a while, he enters dream land.

The next morning, the students start getting up sometime after dawn.

A lot of student didn't get enough sleep. In the sleepy atmosphere, Eru's group was refreshed. There are always students who can't sleep when camping, experiencing this tension is one of the objectives of this field trip. The instructors didn't push the weaker 1st years, so their job content is rather relaxed. After the students finished the simple breakfast made from preserved food, they gathered by their grade year under the commands of the teachers.

After the teacher gave brief instructions, the 2nd years break into teams and head for the depth of the forest. The prime objective of this field trip is to engage in practical battle with the demon beast lurking in the forest, and to hunt for a certain number of them. The 1st years will head to the outer region of the forest, and may have to fight if necessary.

The 1st years were tense as they enter the forest for the first time, while the higher grades bear a different sort of tension as they head into the forest. After a moment, the sound of their armour grows softer as they move further in and the forest turns quiet once again.

And so, this long day that all students in the knighthood faculty will never forget begins.

## **Knight's & Magic Vol 1 Chapter 7**

A physical phenomenon forms out of thin air with a screech and fly towards the 'Staccato Lizard'. The spell 'Aero Ripper' slices through the Staccato Lizard's neck, killing it before it can scream.

"A lizard is heading this way! Vanguard, ready your shields!"

The group follows the clear command of the lady, students lightly equipped with wands and bows retreat to the rear, replaced by students in heavy armor. They form a row and form a wall with their shield to fend off the swarming demon beasts. The beasts that survived the onslaught of magic and arrows pounce on the student in the front row with a fierce collision. The students used their shield to repel the claws and fangs of the demon beast and counter attack with their swords, taking down a large number of beasts.

But the demon beast use their superior numbers to bypass the iron wall defense and to their back. The lightly armored students standing by behind the vanguards will attack when they see any beast slip past the defenses. No demon beast will make it through this formation.

The middle school students who split into groups when they enters Cloquet's Forest gathered and formed into a single unit, positioning themselves into a formation that focus on defense. The surge of demonic beasts charge at them from the depths of the forest. The students took on the waves of demon beasts courageously.

They put down one demon beast after another, but the torrent of demon beasts is just one the tip of the iceberg. Some beast slips through the defenses from the edge of the formation and file towards the forest entrance.

"If this goes on, the 1st year at the forest entrance will be



attacked...! We have to warn them!"

The female student in command realized the danger and wants to warn the group behind them, but they have another impending crisis.

"Watch out! A Macehead Ogre is coming at us!"

The student who saw the Ogre screams. They were warding off small sized enemies like Staccato Lizard and Saber cats, which is manageable despite their troubling numbers. But Macehead Ogre is a different ball game. Similar to its name, Macehead Ogre is a 3m tall giant ape with a head full of short and thick horns. <TL: Kanji ==> needle head ape>. It requires the team work of several students to fight on par with one of them. They can't take on this enemy while engaging the horde of small demon beasts.

"...! 2nd file! Aim for the ape's leg! It will be bad if they draw near!"

Several staff sticks out from the student acting as the defense wall, casting all sorts of spells. They used fire, wind and lightning magic to battle the demon beasts.

We need to turn back time a few hours to understand why the situation is so dire.

Morning, the middle school students from higher grade years head into Cloquet's Forest in teams with high spirits. They kept their guard up, advancing deep into the forest with no resistance and realize that something was wrong. Normally, they would have met with several demon beast attack this deep into the forest, but there have been nothing so far. There was no news of the demon beast disappearing from Cloquet's Forest.

The groups hesitantly loiter around the forest, attempting to reach

other teams for news. But all of the group's report only the absence of demon beast encounters, with no sign of cats or lizards. Finding no trace of the things that should be there is an abnormal sign, so the crowd decides to report back to the teachers after a short discussion.

As they were preparing to leave, the demon beast starts to emerge from left and right. It is a bit of a hassle, but they still raise their arms to destroy the demon beasts.

1, 2-- 5-- 10--

When the demon beasts number in the dozens, the expression on everyone changes. Seeing the state the forest is in, they understand that this is another abnormal event, differing from the one they experienced just now.

But thankfully they were all gathered so they have strength in numbers, a silver lining of this gloomy situation. With their years of experience in knighthood combat training, the students formed ranks with a formation made for large groups. This is the result of the students who aspire to join a band of knights, displaying the fruits of their hard work. And thus, their group clashes head on with the swarm of demon beast and brings us to the present moment.

This is the 10th Macehead Ogre they have defeated.

The tactic of prioritizing range attack is working. They judge that staying put will wear them down, so they retreated towards the forest entrance slowly.

It was fortunate that the student council president Stefania Serrati is present. When they split into team activities, she assigned task and suitable equipment to each group. It was the same for their combined formations, everyone has their role to play. Although they are a pick-up group, things are going well. The problem is the lack of

a commander. It is great just following their given task, but if they don't act when there is an opportunity, they will miss the chance to take advantage of a situation and waste their resources.

Under these circumstances, no one objects when the student council president who is in her senior year step up as the commander. She has the nominal title as well as the grades and was trusted by everyone. Even if this is a pick-up group cobbled together on a whim, her instructions was clear and led the group through difficult situation very well. Their retreat was orderly and casualties was low, but--

(... This is bad. The number of demon beasts is a problem, but why are they so adamant about charging us... How much longer can we hold them?)

Stefania appears calm when she commands, but she was frantic inside. They still have lots of stamina and mana, but they will be overwhelmed if this keeps up.

(We didn't intercept all the demon beasts. I hope the children behind us are safe...!)

The situation is deteriorating, but they still fought on.

The 1st year training at the outer edge of the forest was attacked while the higher grade year students were battling.

In the beginning the students near to the forest screams. Several Staccato lizards pounce on the students and bit them. Their attacks weren't fatal, but it is dangerous if a bunch of them strikes together. The instructors rescued them immediately, attacking the demon beast that was targeting the students.

From the end result, the instructors' action made the situation

worse, but they are not at fault. It will be fine if it was just a few demon beasts, but the demon beasts start to emerge en masse. The teachers missed the chance to fall back and have to keep fighting. They are holding up well, but the students behind them fell into a panic with the emergence of more demon beasts. The instructors who are supposed to maintain order can't draw back and give the students the proper instructions.

The students recklessly wave their staff and cast spells. Their blindly cast magic did not threaten the beasts, almost hitting allies instead. Some drew their swords without thinking about others that are near them, causing further panic. Compared to the higher grade students who were prepared and equipped for battle, and has plenty of practical experience, the 1st years were not ready for a fight.

"...Aero Damned, Canister shot!"

Suddenly, someone leap over the panicking 1st years students. Silver hairs shine brightly under the sun, this image burns deeply into the eyes of the confused students. That person flips in mid air, aimed for the ground and shot out several air bullets. Canister shot meant casting several spells at the same time like a shotgun.

The air bullet hits the ground with the sound of explosion. The compressed air bullet squeezes the face of the beasts together before blasting the demon beasts and the ground away.

The merciless magic destroyed a large amount of demon beast through carpet bombing. Two more students move in from the left and right. One of them charges into the demon beast crowd with a big bastard sword in hand. He uses physical boost to swing his giant sword, slicing the demon beasts in half. He uses the momentum to turn his body, drawing another weapon from his waist and point it at the surviving beast.

"Too naive! Sonic Boom!"

This weapon-- gun staff Gandiva produces a vacuum from its tip, forming an air current rushing towards the demon beasts, hitting those that were outside sword range. Their bodies twisted unnaturally and were blown away.

A girl showed up beside him, holding two bayonet staff pointed at different beasts.

"Riot Sparrow!"

Lightning fell, accompanied by the sound of thunder the next second, striking the gathered demon beast. She didn't even look at the beast that spasm in death, attaching the gun staff onto the sword in her sheath. She holds the compound swords in both hands, slashing at every demon beast that came within range. Even a thin sword can cut demon beasts in half if it is strengthened by magic.

The 3 students attacked like a storm, reducing the number of beast drastically. The pressure from the approaching swarm lessens, giving everyone a chance to catch their breath. The students stopped moving not because of the chaos, but from the shock of seeing the one-sided massacre.

"Draw your staff."

The short student who leapt over the crowd stood in front of them and issued an order. The young, tender voice that sounds as pleasant as a bird has an air of authority in it, making everyone follow his instructions.

"Everyone gather up, form into tight ranks. Teacher!"

The dumbfounded instructors finally came to their senses.

"Please take command and keep the initiative. Please retreat, the 3

of us will support the others."

The teachers start giving out instructions in a hurry. The students form a tight formation and strengthen their defenses. For 1st year students with inferior combat abilities to fight demon beast, they will need to concentrate their firepower. Although it is still a bit flimsy, but the teachers commanding them can handle it.

Ernesti stares at the demon beast rushing out of the forest and slowly raises his Winchester. Chid and Ady stood beside him like his guards. Chid lean the bastard sword on his shoulder with one hand and grabs a Gandiva with the other while Ady rest the tip of her dual sword in her hands on the ground. Their eyes are full of determination when they see the swarm of demon beast before them.

"Hey, isn't these numbers a bit too much. Oh well, we can wreck havoc if more of them comes!"

"Hmmp-- I won't hold back!"

Eru reign in the spirited twins.

"It's fine if the both of you want to fight, but don't forget about the rest of the student body."

"Eh--? They can take care of themselves... probably..."

Ady wants to protest, but stopped midway. Because Eru is staring at her with a stern face.

"You don't need to stay here if you just want to wreck havoc."

"Uguu, I... I get it! I will help them!"

Chid raise his hands in surrender.

"Fortunately, this is still the entrance of the forest. We can get back to the campsite if we retreat. If we link up with the Silhouette Knights there, things will lighten up. Before that..."

Eru cast an Aero Damned as he speaks. The demon beast that wanted to attack while they were talking was sent flying.

"We need to protect them."

Eru made up his mind, lift Winchester and shot out a string of spells.

While the middle schoolers is in the forest, the high school knight runners were relieved from their duty and starts their training. Since they cannot increase the stress on the machines since the Silhouette Knights have to be conserved for escort duties, so their training centered on man to man spars.

Edgar is in the midst of sword swinging practice when noises that shouldn't appear from the forest.

"Hey, isn't the forest rather noisy?"

"Hmm?"

The moment he brought it up, the students around him perk up their ears. Sounds of tremors that weren't here before came from the direction of the forest, and they knew what it was.

"That sound of explosion... magic!?"

"Something is up... Exercise cut! Pilots prepare to sortie. The situation in the forest seems to be bad, scout it out!"

The group in the camp moved hurriedly. The knightsmiths working on the Silhouette Knights withdraw to let the pilots mount on. They

skipped the initialization check and let the machine stand up, drowning the surrounding with the sound of the churning ether reactor. But they can't send all the machines out, so 5 Silhouette Knights were dispatched into the forest.

"Hey, look at that..."

The scale of the crisis was beyond their imagination. Swarms of demon beasts were charging at them before they enter the forest, the numbers was more than they have ever seen. The beast's shrieks as they charge in all directions.

"What... What is happening?"

"The demon beasts are going out of control? Are the brats in trouble!?"

They drew their swords and advance into the forest. They linked up with the first years in no time. The 1st years has successfully retreated with Eru's quick thinking.

The 1st years bundles together, retreating slowly as they cast magic to restrict the demon beasts' movements. The beast that rushes at the formation will be repelled by magic. Edgar move in to support them, piloting Earlecumber as a shield in front of them. The tense first years breathe a sigh of relief when they saw the Silhouette Knights appear and dispose of the demon beasts. The strongest combat units of humanity -- the Silhouette Knights are trusted by the populace. Especially at the scene of a demon beast's raid, their power to match a hundred demon beasts provides a great sense of security.

They retreated to the campsite, setting up fences around the area to fortify their defenses.

With the Silhouette Knights taking charge of defense, the instructors



and the high school knight runners begin to discuss their plan of action. There's enough defense to protect the 1st years, so that isn't an issue. Their main worry lies with the higher year students who delved deep into the forest.

"Do you know the routes taken by the 2nd and 3rd years?"

"That is hard to say. Because this was meant to be a practical session, the area of operation is the whole forest, and there is no guarantee they will stay in the assigned location."

The instructors reviewed the action plan of each higher year student and groans with a serious expression. They want to rescue them, but with the limited number of Silhouette Knights, they won't know where to start. Cloquet's Forest was vast, running around like a headless chicken will be counter intuitive. But they don't have time to hesitate too. At this point, Ernesti stick his head out from the instructor's side.

"Where are the places in the forest that can gather people easily?"

"Hmm? That... if they want to rendezvous, it should be nearby."

The teacher was surprised by Eru's sudden question, but still answered him. It is meaningless for a 1st year to discuss this with them, but with his spectacular performance earlier, no one felt out of place with Eru's intrusion.

"With the scale of the demon beast horde, won't the seniors group up to resist? That's why I think we should look for places where large group of people can gather."

"Hmm... You have a point."

"The Silhouette Knights can't move smoothly in heavily forested areas. Taking our combat assets into consideration, we should start

our search from open spaces, right?"

The map sprawled out on the table was marked with red lines showing the route of advancement. To reach the designated areas, they have to cut through the center of the forest.

"Also, you can take out the demon beast coming this way if you use this route. If anyone is caught in a battle, just holler and you will be fine."

Because this is an emergency, everyone accepts Eru's proposal and form a team to rescue the higher year students. The campsite needs guards, so only half of the machines are deployed -- 5 Silhouette Knights.

Edgar who is the pilot of the pure white Silhouette Knight -- Earlecumber was the first to volunteer. As he was entering Earlecumber, someone call out to him. Edgar turns back and saw Eru standing there.

"Can I go too?"

"Why?"

"The family members of my friends are also in the forest. They are worried, so I want to join the search if possible."

Edgar felt troubled. Although it is dangerous, it shouldn't be a problem with Eru's combat skills. And with the rational thinking he displayed during the conference, it will be helpful to bring him along. Edgar agrees after thinking about it.

Earlecumber lets Eru stand in his hand and stood up. Behind him is Helvi in Trandorches and 3 other machines. They enter the forest with heavy steps.

"Those who have depleted your mana help the wounded! Front row switch with standby row! Hold the line, everyone just hold on a little longer!"

Their mana is exhausted and they are panting hard. They try to stabilize their breathing as they continue to defeat the unending torrent of demon beasts. The higher year students protect their wounded as they continue to retreat from the forest.

It has been several hours since the battle begun, their retreat has been difficult. They are fine with handling the beast one at a time, but when a huge wave swells up and attack, they are forced to deplete their stamina. The Macehead Ogre that shows up from time to time drains their mana. Because they can't cast powerful enough spells because of the lack of mana, a Macehead Ogre managed to close in on them and cause serious damage. About half of the group is in the state of mana depletion or have been wounded, their forces are dwindling. They conserve their remaining stamina and keep switching the vanguard to hold the up the battle front. But they don't know how much longer they can last; they are close to the camp site, which is the only hope that keeps them going.

But reality is cruel.

Two Macehead Ogre appeared dead ahead -- They are so agitated that they are foaming at the mouth, charging straight at the group. Compared to the beginning, the magic at their disposal is much lower in grade, so the students can't stop them. The vanguards frown. The sole Macehead Ogre that attacked earlier wiped out over a dozen students, inflicting heavy casualties. If they take on two at the same time, they might be wiped out.

Stefania who is in command knows this very well. On top of giving out command, she has moved to the front line with her staff in hand. She has gone through all sorts of possibility while fighting, but

they don't have the combat prowess to break away from the encirclement. The group is reaching their limit of their physical and mana reserves. They can't muster the strength to defeat the Ogres even if they wanted to.

The Macehead Ogre has an endurance that matches its tough appearance. They advance steadily, making light of the desperate struggles of the students. The chaotic attacks serve to agitate them instead, making them more excitable.

"This is it..."

Someone mumbled this softly. The Macehead Ogre who is right before them raise their fist, aiming for the head of a vanguard. The vanguard raised their shields, even though it is in vain.

That's why he didn't understand what happened when he hears the sound of a dull explosion over his head.

He didn't see several Piercing Lances flying over his head with incredible accuracy, hitting the arm of the Macehead Ogre dead on. He also missed seeing the piercing lance exploding one by one in accordance to its script, blowing the Ogre's arm away. By the time the vanguard composed himself, the Ogre was running away yelping.

Following immediately is something that is beyond his imagination -- the one which came flying wasn't just the magic projectile, but the caster himself -- Ernesti, who rush in like a silver bullet. This is a literal description, as Eru is conjuring 'Aero Thrust' to accelerate as he leaps, just like a bullet. He uses the momentum to catch up with the limping Ogre that lost its arm, slashing off its head with a Sonic Blade. The head flew into the air and the massive body collapse.

Eru lands with enough force to dig into the ground, turning his head as he slides and points his Winchester at the other Macehead Ogre. Fireball was rapidly cast from its tip, engulfing the Ogre the

explosion that shakes the ground. Half of the Ogre's body was charred and falls.

"Now... Now's the chance! Kill it!"

Stefania was stunned by Eru's sudden intrusion into the battlefield, but she didn't let the chance slip away. Her command made the students move, finishing off the Ogre.

"... Eru..."

"Sorry for the wait, Student Council President. I brought reliable reinforcements."

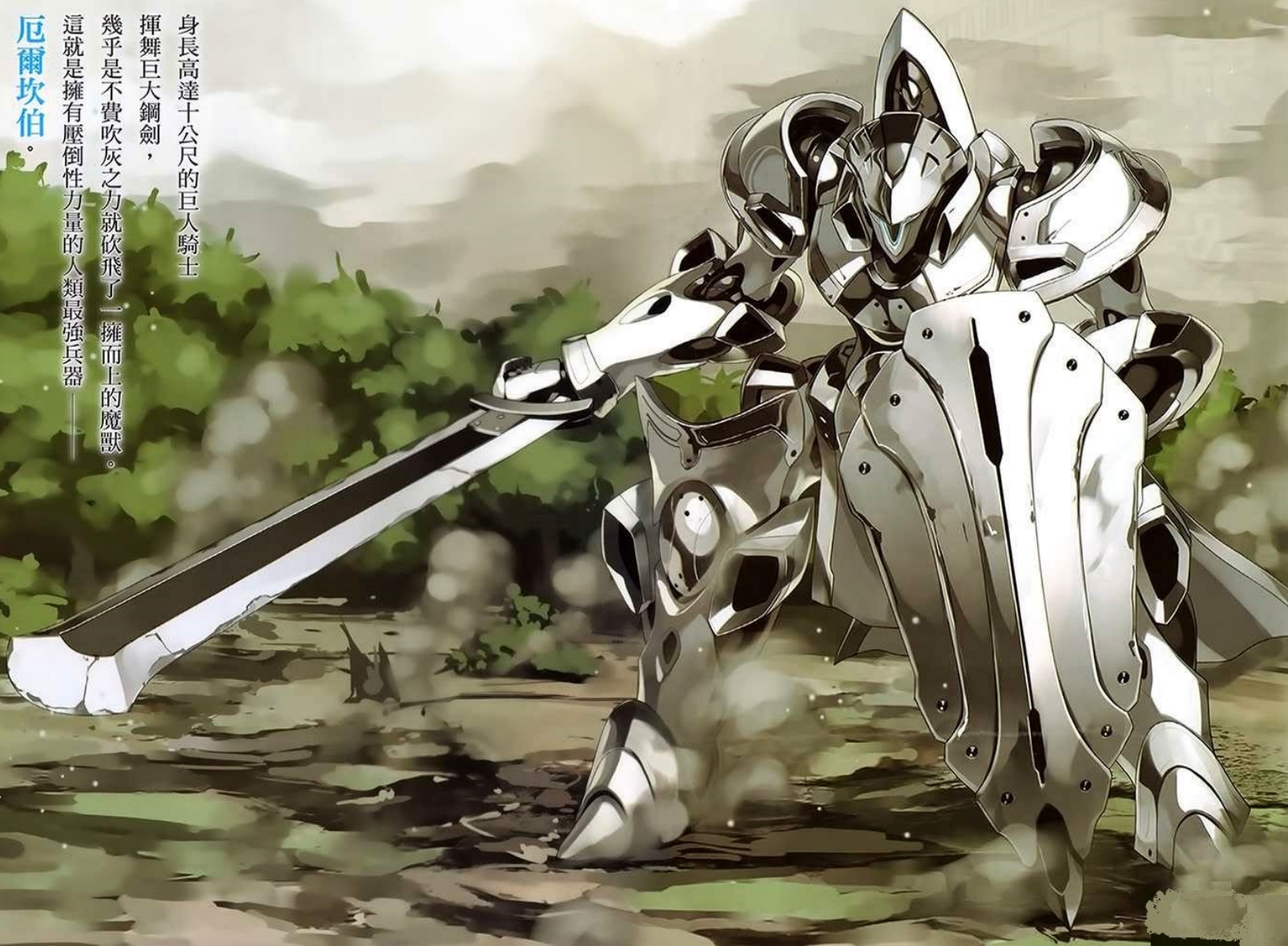
Without needing Eru to show her, she can hear heavy footfalls behind. The rescue team overtakes the higher year students, spreading out in front and protecting them.

The 10m high giant knights swings its gigantic iron sword, easily wiping out a wave of demon beast, this is the overwhelming strength of humanity's strongest weapon. The students erupted in cheers on the sight of the powerful Silhouette Knights. There are no reinforcements more reassuring for the group on the verge of defeat. They are safe.

身長高達十公尺的巨人騎士  
揮舞巨大鋼劍，

幾乎是不費吹灰之力就砍飛了一擁而上的魔獸。  
這就是擁有壓倒性力量的人類最強兵器——

厄爾坎伯。



"... Well well, bringing Ernesti along was the right choice."

Edgar who is riding inside Earlecumber mumbles to himself as he drives the demon beast off.

They followed Eru's suggestion and search places with wide open spaces. They discovered the higher year students shortly after advancing in that direction. This is because the students are bunched together and ready to retreat. But they are in a crisis when Edgar found them, the Macehead Ogres were about to break through the formation. They can take down the demon beast easily with the Silhouette Knight's power, but they are too far away. They will also hit the students if they use Silhouette arms.

Frustrated with his inability to help despite having the strength to do so, Edgar grinded his teeth in regret. At this moment, Ernesti who is in the hand of Earlecumber charged ahead. The Ogres fell easily before the rampaging Eru, making Edgar sigh. His performance is shameful when compared to Eru.

With the Silhouette Knights who made it in the nick of time as escorts, the students continue to retreat. There are many injuries, but no one was lost and everybody made it back to the camp site in one piece.

This happened slightly after the Laihiala pilot Academy student body left Jantunen for Cloquet's forest.

A Silhouette Knight passed by the convoy and arrives at the eastern gate of Jantunen. This is probably urgent as the exhausted knight runner approached the knights after reaching the gate. The knights were stunned by the sudden turn of events, but their faces turned pale after receiving the report of the pilot and hastily informed their commander.

"Is... this true!?"

Commander of Jantunen garrison knights -- Philip Hallhagen's expression changed after hearing the report from his subordinate. The vice commander Gottfried Hyvärinen who was also in the commander's office was expressionless, but his face is white. This shows the impact this report gave them.

"Yes sir! Stronghold Balguerie was decimated under the attack of the battalion level demon beast -- Land Emperor. It is likely the defending team has been wiped out. Behemoth is moving west into the heart of the kingdom, and is expected to show up around Jantunen soon. Sir!"

Battalion level demon beast's sudden attack makes Philip's head ache like a nightmare. But the commander has no time to waste. It is fortunate a knight runner brought this news to him, giving him some buffer time to prepare for the Behemoth to appear. Every second is precious.

"Issue emergency orders, muster all the knights near Jantunen! This order overrides any mission they are currently undertaking!"

The orderly repeats his given orders, salute and sprint out immediately. Philips and Gottfried dash out as if they were chasing after him and head towards the war council room.

"A behemoth... Even Jantunen doesn't have a battalion, only the capital can match that."

"The categorization is only a guideline. Even with our forces, we can take it down if we are prepared for major losses."

Philips clenches his fist as he moves hurriedly.



"I know, but the problem is the scale of the losses! It's meaningless to blindly sacrifice the hundred Silhouette Knights in our garrison! Jantunen will be left defenseless!"

Gottfried was quiet after hearing this. He did not wish to risk the destruction of their band of knights, but behemoth has already ravaged a stronghold. If Jantunen suffers heavy collateral damage, the trade routes of the kingdom will be heavily congested. If the supplies to the frontlines are cut off, it will adversely affect the fortresses, leading to more catastrophes. This could determine the fate of the entire nation, they have to kill behemoth even if it takes the lives of the entire knight company. Gottfried has to offer his consul if necessary, that is his duty as the vice commander.

"...No, there is no time to discuss this. If we don't stop it here, the entire kingdom might fall. Send an envoy to the capital, they will need to send a replacement company of knights after we fall..."

Seeing Philip face twist with worry, Gottfried can only nod in silence.

All the knights on duty were already there when Philip entered the war council room. All of them wear anxious faces because of the impending crisis.

The knights outside the city received a call order, so they have to assess the situation before all the knights return. A map was prepared, and the possible advancement route of behemoth was highlighted. The knight runner who sent the warning doesn't know the current position of behemoth either, so they have to use factors such as terrain and the mobility of behemoth to predict its advancement route and estimate its rough position. They will also need to decide where they will fight the behemoth.

"From the direction it is heading and the terrain around stronghold Barkley, the most possible route is around D'Aiguebelle mountains,

through the forest at the foot of the mountain."

"That is right beside Jantunen... Its current estimated position?"

The knight who was asked pointed to the map.

"I think it passed through Crepel Plains and about to enter Cloquet's Forest."

"Cloquet's Forest... Uguu, that's nearer than I thought. If we are going to intercept, we will need to do it somewhere nearer to Jantunen..."

A knight behind him suddenly shouts.

"Did you say Cloquet's Forest...!?"

"What? What's wrong with Cloquet's Forest?"

No one wants to listen to bad news, but they need to keep tabs on elements that could affect them. Before the watchful eyes of everyone, the knight announce with a pale face.

"... Laihiala academy is conducting a field trip there right now!"

"Wha...!?"

All the knights present are speechless. Not only Jantunen, even citizens who are the assets of the nation, as well as the children are in danger. There are knights in the room who have relatives studying in Laihiala knighthood school right now. Some of the knights approached Philip frantically.

"We need to go to Cloquet's forest!"

"We have to save the children!"

Philip was troubled with the piling troubles, but he did not consider it too long. Another mission takes priority.

"...Send out messengers, but the company will stay put until we have gathered enough forces."

"Commander! Are you forsaking them!?"

"Nonsense!"

Philip roar at the knights who are pestering him, his voice filled with anguish.

"I want to help them too, but with our current forces, we will need to give everything to take down behemoth!... I am not optimistic about the coming battle. Striking now without mustering the whole company will just be wasting our numbers, we might even be wiped out by behemoth. Don't be mistaken! Our objective is to defeat behemoth, defend Jantunen and safeguard the entire Fremmevira kingdom!"

The rowdy knights quiet down. They also understand they have no say in this.

"... What we can do now is to have faith in their luck and wits..."

They looked into the darkness in the direction of Cloquet's Forest.

The entrance of Cloquet's Forest, Laihiala Knighthood school camp site.

After the upper year students in middle school retreated successfully, a simple fence was erected alongside the Silhouette Knights, forming a simple line of defense.

Most demon beast emerging from the forest is about 1m in height, the largest being 3m tall. Their combat capability is insignificant compared to the 10m tall Silhouette Knights. They swat away clusters of beast with a single sword swing. But there are a few that sneak past because of the large difference in size. They swarm towards the fence, and are held off by the students who move in to fill the gap.

From the demon beast's view point, the Silhouette Knight who seems to be flaunting its existence is intimidating. Unwilling to face them, the beasts flank the Silhouette Knights, attacking the base camp from either side. The middle schoolers in the higher years suffered many casualties, so this is a favorable situation for the knighthood students who are lacking in manpower.

After the sun sets beyond the mountains, the attack came to an end. The students who are alert even with the absence of enemies instinctively felt that the battle was over and takes a breather.

"Is the demon beast stampede over?..."

Stefania Serrati who felt fatigue from the depth of her heart was relieved. She was leading the able bodied student body to the very end. They met up with the teachers back at the base camp, but they judged that it will be easier for Stefania who has been commanding from the very beginning to carry on. But part of it was because her sense of responsibility.

"Chid, Ady... Eru."

With the situation calming down, she greets the resting students and surveyed the camp site. She called out to the familiar faces loudly when she came across them.

"Ah, Onee sama... Are you okay? I heard the student body was in trouble!"

Stefania shakes her head.

"As you can see, I am doing well. Enough about me, you guys were reckless out there."

Stefania's looks amazed as she spoke. The students who just retreated back to camp were riddled with wounds and fatigue, so their combat capabilities were minimal. They will struggle to handle the demon beast that sneak pass the Silhouette Knights in this state. But thanks to Eru buying time for them, they managed to recover and make it through.

"We were the only ones who can still fight, so we went a little overboard."

"I think the 3 of you were as effective as a platoon, this is not going 'a little overboard'... Hai, never mind. More importantly... Eru!"

Stefania approached Eru who was standing behind the two of them and hugs him. She didn't care about Eru who was surprised and couldn't resist, rubbing her face on that silky smooth head of hair.

"Ah~~ this healing ♪~~ I can keep fighting if Eru is here."

(Stefania-Senpai... Can't be helped. I will give her some service for her hard work. If my sacrifice can improve her mood, it is nothing.)

Stefania happily plays his hair and poke his cheeks, but Eru did not resist, allowing her to toy with him. Ady seems angry but didn't stop her.

Stefania enjoyed herself with the cuddling for a long while. Suddenly

an awkward voice calls her from behind.

"Eh... Student Council President..."

The student is looking for her, but was surprised with how creepy Stefania is smiling. This is expected as Stefania was leading the student body coolly earlier, but is now hugging a junior with a lewd smile.

"What is it?"

"The teacher is asking for you to discuss our next move."

"I understand. Sorry you three. Let's chat later, it will just take a little while."

It is too late to cover up, but Stefania doesn't seem to mind, changing to council president mode immediately. The three of them waved at her with an amazed expression as Stefania leaves.

(Alright, we tided over the dangerous period, but what's next?)

But made it through the stampede of demon beasts, but Eru doesn't think things are over yet. He looked back at Cloquet's Forest, which seems to be growing darker as if it wants to mask itself from Eru's sight.

Even Eru is not sure what is lurking deep within the forest.

"And so, we are moving out tomorrow?"

The instructors are unable to come to a consensus for the next course of action. This is understandable as they have not grasped the whole situation at hand. Anyway, they have informed everyone of this course of action over dinner. Eru and the others drink the

soup made from common vegetables and the food they brought along while they confirm the circumstances.

"Correct, we have many wounded but no one is in danger of dying, the worse is just fractures. There are many who have depleted their mana and are exhausted. The teachers feel it is dangerous to move with our lack of fighting power."

"Hai, isn't it dangerous to rest here?"

"The horses will also be affected by the dark. The instructors decided that being attacked while moving tiredly on the carriage is too risky, it is better to wait for day break while taking advantage of the base camp's defenses. I think we won't be attacked by demon beasts in such numbers any time soon."

"Oh-- what an optimistic view."

"Not really, all the options are like a gamble, this is simply choosing the safest option. If something do come in the middle of the night, it will be easier for the Silhouette Knight to defend if we stay put."

What they can do now is to rest well, detect danger early and react to the situation. In the end, they have to depend on themselves. After dinner, they try to relax and shake off their tense emotions, putting their hopes in making it to Jantunen in the morning.

But they missed an important thing-- What created the stampede?

They didn't notice that the demon beasts heading their way were desperate, as if something was chasing them to the west.

They only regret missing this detail during the twilight hours just before dawn.

The red sun rises slowly over the mountain range. The students who took the last shift suppress their drowsiness and yawns. The surrounding is peaceful. After meeting the large scale migration of the demon beast, there were almost no demon beasts left in Cloquet's forest. The whole forest seems to have died with a silent air about it.

-- And that silence was broken suddenly. They noticed the weird noises coming from the forest. The sound of trees breaking and falling appears to follow a rhythm. Something heavy seems to be hitting the ground. It didn't take long for them to understand what that means, sounding the alarm immediately.

"Oh shit! A big one! A big one is coming!"

Both instructors and students who are sleeping jumped out of bed when the alarm sounded. They didn't sleep well because of the tension, so everyone was moving once they got up. The high school knight runners who are dragging their tired bodies to perform their stand by duties mount their Silhouette Knights, activating them immediately to guard the entrance to the forest.

The sound of trees falling can be heard clearly now along with the thundering footsteps. It is clear that something big is approaching.

"Hey, isn't this bad?"

It goes without saying that everyone can feel this is a crisis like never before. In this intense atmosphere, everyone's eye is drawn towards the forest entrance.

There are no demon beasts larger than duel-level in Cloquet's Forest, the reason why it was chosen for the field trip. But the footfall of the approaching beast is telling of how large it is.

A large demon beast that shouldn't appear in Cloquet's Forest. The



swarms of demon beast that attacked them out of nowhere.

The demon beast wave was so large as if the whole forest was rushing out. Could it be they were chased out by the intruding colossal beast?

The trees near the entrance fell like dominoes. Finally, the demon beast appears with the light of the breaking dawn. It is covered in uneven armor with protruding edges. It is easily mistaken to be a mountain and humanity's strongest weapon, the Silhouette Knight looks as weak as a child in contrast. Its eyes that are disproportionately small scan the area before it.

Everyone was awestruck, feeling fearful and weak before its majesty. Land Emperor -- the colossal beast that appeared at the border of the nation, is now advancing dangerously close to Jantunen.

An abnormal silence enclosed this space. It spurns from the tension between the demon beast and the people present.

The humans on scene, Laihiala's students, are awed by the gargantuan sized behemoth and can't move. The elite knights posted to the front lines were also stunned when they met behemoth, it is too much to ask 15 years old student to find enough courage to stand up to it.

During this moment when time seems to freeze, the behemoth moved first with its calmer state of mind. It looks around, opens its mouth and howl. Instead of sound, it feels closer to being a shock wave moving through the air. Its horrifying lung capacity releases a roar that trembles the earth, shattering several trees near to it. The armor of the Silhouette Knight closest to it shivers, and it took a few steps backwards because of the pressure. The sound is so loud the students curled up in a ball cupping their ears, some even fainted

from the shock wave.

This is the signal that undid their bindings. When they start to move, the silence before is just like an illusion. Everyone is running away from the demon beast as if they were pushed back. This is not because they have come to their senses, but chaotic actions due to their state of panic. The instructors lost control of the situation, everyone is just focused on running away from behemoth.

Escaping is the best option under such circumstances, but the way they are doing it is bad. The range a human can travel on foot is limited, they need to run to the carriage if they want to escape further. The panic stricken students didn't think about that and is just concentrating on getting away in any direction.

Just as the group were dispersing, there was suddenly an explosion to the front. No matter how terrified the people are, they won't run into an explosion. The student body's movement stopped for an instant and a figure used to chance and jump in front of everyone.

"Get away! Run! It's dangerous! Everyone head for the carriage!"

Following Eru's lead, the few students who kept their wits shot out Fireball, preventing the group from spreading out. They attract the attention of the students with spells, herding them towards the carriage like hunting guides. They are still far from being calm, but the group is stable enough to understand instructions. They run towards the carriage in order to escape from behemoth.

The middle schoolers are not the only one awed by the behemoth, it was the same for the high school knight runners. Because they are in possession of the power of the Silhouette Knights, behemoth is a bigger threat to them. With the responsibility that comes with this power, they can't run away. Even if they want to fight, the enemy is too strong.

"Don't stop! Move--!"

Caught in a dilemma because of an enemy out of their league, the first to snap out of it is Edgar. Be it fight or flight, remaining still before behemoth is as good as suicide.

The knight runners finally recognize the behemoth is preparing to charge and tries to evade in a panic. The momentum of the beast is incomparable to anything in this world. Even a Silhouette Knight won't stand a chance in its face. The pilots break out in cold sweat, losing the will to fight. What can they do to battle this terrifying demon beast?

But one man, Edgar, suppress his fear when he realize the advancement route of the behemoth coincides with the carriages the middle schoolers are using to flee and says with resolve:

"I will distract the behemoth! Everyone, please lend me your strength!"

"Huh? Edgar! Do you know what you are saying!? That is a behemoth! It will send all of us flying with a kick!"

"I know! But our juniors will be wiped out if we let it rampage. No, not just that. It will assault Jantunen if it heads down the same way as the carriages!"

Helvi who snapped at Edgar knows too. There is nowhere to run even if they escape from here, it will just lead to more collateral damage. She grits her teeth with enough force to splinter it.

"We have no choice but to go through with it...!"

"We are knights. We learn swordsmanship and piloting in order to protect our kingdom, how can we run without a fight!"

Edgar equips magic armament onto Earlecumber as he spoke. The ether reactor is running the flow of mana activates the magic armament... the whole Silhouette Knight glows dimly.

"I don't want to die pointlessly too. We need to draw the behemoth's attention!"

"Hai, there's no other way!"

Edgar doesn't want to lose the spirit he managed to squeeze out. Earlecumber led the charge, aiming at the behemoth's leg.

"All units draw staff! Use magic bombardment to draw its attention and pull back!"

Edgar shouts as he pulls his control stick all the way back. Earlecumber channels its mana to the magic armament under the control of its pilot, lightning staff Arquebus. The tip of the simple longish weapon glows brightly, a lightning bolt strikes at behemoth with a flash.

Unfortunately the blast has no effect. One reason is the behemoth is too big, the other factor is the electricity was directed to the ground from the armored shell without hurting the interior.

The other 3 Silhouette Knight apart from Edgar has also armed themselves with magic armaments, circling around the behemoth while firing their overed spells. It is hard to tell the effectiveness of the attacks, but they achieve their goal of getting the behemoth's attention. The behemoth turns its head when he noticed the disturbance, looking at the Silhouette Knights casting spells at it with annoyed eyes.

"How... It is ineffective..."

"It's fine! Don't stop and run! We just need to buy some time!"

The knight runners understood the behemoth is focusing on them, so they lure the behemoth away from the middle schoolers and retreat at full speed.

As the high school pilots battles the behemoth, the middle schooler is rushing onto the carriage.

Because of the number of people, only about half of them have evacuated despite the carriages being dispatched one by one.

(There are still a lot of people left... we need more time, we can only depend on our seniors now...)

Eru stands at the end of the line, looking at the fight between behemoth and the Silhouette Knight with a grim expression. Using spells beyond human capability -- overpowered spells are negated by the invulnerable armor shell, leaving no trace of injury. Before the colossal beast, even the crystallization of human technology, the Silhouette Knights are insignificant. The Eru being just one person is even more powerless.

His face is serious. The situation of the high school pilots are overwhelming bad... No, it is hopeless, their attacks does no damage at all. Their tactic revolves around retreating, disrupting it with deft movements. The Silhouette Knights will fall with just a single hit because of the difference in mass. If the pilot continue to accumulate fatigue and stress -- it is hard to think of a good ending.

(I will evacuate everyone, so don't die senpai...!)

No matter how fast a Silhouette Knight is, there is no guarantee it can get out of the way of a behemoth charging with a full head of steam. Hence, the other Knights will concentrate their attack on the

behemoth to divert the behemoth's attention if it locks on to their comrades. Their attack did not hurt the behemoth, but it was frustrated with the annoyance.

"Hahaha! Is that it, this thing is big, but can't do anything to us!"

Dietrich shouts. In order to overcome the intimidating aura stemming from the gigantic body of the beast, he has to convince himself that he has the upper hand. It was meant to motivate himself, but because the tactic to stall for time is working too well, they are taking things lightly. Could it be this is a slow and dumb beast that is all bark but no bite? In actual fact, it will take just one hit to shatter a Silhouette Knight, but toying with the behemoth this way has dulled their sense of judgment.

For a short time, they seem to be successful in their bid to drag out the battle. The behemoth that is chasing after the escaping Silhouette Knights slowed down suddenly. The pilots watch the behemoth's changes, as it took a huge breath with a lung capacity appropriate for its colossal size, sucking in an illogical amount of air.

The next second, a fierce breath of tornado shot out from its mouth. This is a ranged magic attack. The pilots who assumed the behemoth can only charge and attack physically were caught off guard by the sudden projectile spell. A tornado went ahead in a straight line. The turbulence from the current engulfed a machine that didn't get away in time. The Silhouette Knight can't resist the raging air currents which twist its armor and squash its crystal tissue.

The 10m tall mass of steel -- the Silhouette Knight flew into the sky and fell heavily to the ground. The impact shatters the limbs which has the least durability which breaks off from the torso. Because the Silhouette Knights are humanoid shaped, its tattered image burns deep into the heart of the pilots.

"Hya! Ugu... Wah!"

Dietrich saw the whole process clearly. His classmate who have been with him through high school -- and his Silhouette Knight was destroyed, making him scream as if his throat was in spasm.

The next moment, another machine disappeared before Dietrich's eyes with a loud bang. He didn't understand what happened, but he gets it when he shifts his gaze.

Behemoth struck with its tail. The moment that machine stopped, it was hit by the tail which was swinging with inertia, flying out in a twisted lump. Dietrich is safe because of luck -- his position was slightly out of range. He would have been swept by the tail if he was a couple of steps forward.

Two Silhouette Knights was easily shattered like some pottery in a blink of an eye. The pilot realized how wrong they are to think they can hold behemoth off somehow. Behemoth turns its head towards the surviving Silhouette Knights as if it was flaunting how easily it can destroy the Silhouette Knights. The perpetrator of the entire incident is targeting them next.

"Wwwwaaaaahhhh!"

"Oooorrrraaaaa!"

The two sounds coincides with each other. The former was Dietrich screaming in horror because of the demon beast, the latter was Edgar shout to overcome the fear in his heart to steel himself.

(Damn! How can I be so careless! Behemoth is a battalion level demon beast... I knew it was a monster that cannot be handled by the handful of us!)

Edgar can't forgive himself for the loss of his comrade's life because he underestimated the enemy. His anger is stronger than his fear,

pushing him on.

"Everyone avoid facing it head on! No matter what, evasion takes priority! Just a bit more, everyone please hang on!"

They have engaged the behemoth, everyone will wipe out if they turn and run suddenly. After hearing Edgar's spirited voice, the other knight runners respond to him even though they are shivering from fear. All of them use everything they have got to dodge the behemoth's attack. Right now, they can only put their life on the line and keep pestering the behemoth.

Under the rampage of the behemoth's magic, the high school pilots are forced into a dire situation.

Eru and the others safely evacuated the middle schoolers, and he hopped onto the last carriage himself. He watched the battle from the carriage speeding away from behemoth. The high schoolers are at a severe disadvantage with the magic attack of the behemoth, killing off any chance of them running away even if Eru and the rest have gone away. The conversation he had with Edgar flashed across his mind. Even if his message won't reach them, the only thing he can do now is to give his support.

At this moment, a red shadow appeared in the corner of Eru's eye. He turned his head in a hurry and was shocked after identifying it. The red shadow was the Silhouette Knight, Guyale.

Could it be... As he thinks, he turns his head ahead and saw the battle still raging on between the behemoth and the other Silhouette Knights. This mean Guyale is abandoning the other students and escaping by himself. Eru jump off the carriage when he understands this. Everyone was stunned by his action and couldn't stop him. He ran after Guyale with the speed of a bullet.



A red Silhouette Knight was running in the bright forest under the sunny sky.

The quiet forest extends all around it, there is nothing in the surroundings. But the red machine was focused in its task, sprinting hard as if it was being chased. In fact, the red Silhouette Knight Guyale and its pilot Dietrich Cunitz was pressed into this situation with no route to escape. What is driving Dietrich is pure terror. The image of his classmate's Silhouette Knight being crushed by behemoth cycles in his mind endlessly. Dietrich doesn't even dare to turn back, blindly pushing Guyale to sprint forward. Although he is not the one running, but his lungs are constricted because of fear and his breathing is irregular.

Knight runners have absolute trust in their machines. There are demon beasts which have power beyond the Silhouette Knights, but Dietrich didn't think they are invincible. He was not prepared to face an enemy that shrug off attacks and can destroy Silhouette Knights in one move. In the end, he fell into a state of panic and he made the shameful choice of saving himself by sacrificing his classmates.

But the goddess of fate did not let him off so easily.

Guyale's speed suddenly dropped drastically. Although Dietrich is in a state of panic, he immediately thought of a reason for this. He went through the battle earlier and sprinted at full speed. He didn't display the calmness he showed in his training, running hard in an inefficient manner. What awaits him is a dead battery.

The fear that accompanied his immobility seizes Dietrich, but he can still do something about it. He stops Guyale and switch to standby mode to rest and recover his mana reserve. After confirming that behemoth is not pursuing him, he sighs in relief and steadies his hurried breathing.

After stopping, he gathered some of his wits and felt a strong pang of regret. He shakes his head to clear away this thought. But being unable to move, all sorts of thoughts emerge, pushing Dietrich to a corner.

-- That's right, I abandoned my comrades and ran--

-- Leaving your brother in arms behind, a shameful behavior for knights--

(So... So what! Staying there means dying in vain! I only chose to live, and the code of chivalry didn't say anything about dying for nothing!)

Dietrich denies the accusations of his own conscience. His calm breathing becomes hurried again, he didn't even notice his hand holding the control stick is becoming stiff because he was gripping too hard. His eyes open wide as he sweat profusely as he affirms and denies his own thoughts.

Dietrich who was tormented by his own thoughts heard a sound that drew nearer from the distance and came to his senses. That is the screeching sound of compressed air, which is followed by the sound of metal rubbing on metal. His vision ahead was suddenly widened and he can't react because of how sudden things are happening.

The chest plate armor of Silhouette Knights is connected by compressed air for ease of entry into the cockpit. But it is opened suddenly, although he didn't activate the control for the hatch, and has no reason to do so. To open the hatch from the outside, you have to manipulate a complicated set of levers and have to be careful of not dismantling the armor by accident. From this situation, someone is opening the hatch from the outside by lever.

A figure jumped up to the open hatch which confirmed his

deduction. A petite body with a head of silvery purple hair. That figure is Ernesti who smiles casually at Dietrich and says:

"I finally caught up with you Senpai."

Eru said with a simple tone as if he has simply forgotten to bring something. Eru tilts his head and continued:

"I will go straight to the point Senpai, are you running away?"

For Eru, this question was meant to be a confirmation, but Dietrich trembled when he heard Eru. The sudden appearance of his junior asking so bluntly made him hysterical.

"...! Ah, d... damn... right! Running... What's wrong with that! Just missing one man won't change the tide of battle! Why do I have to die in vain? The chivalry code doesn't tell us to abandon our lives!"

Dietrich repeats his thoughts, not caring how broken his logic was. He is not answering Eru, but trying to convince himself. Eru nods with his usual peaceful smile and said to the agitated Dietrich:

"That's great."

"... What?"

Dietrich didn't expect such a reaction and lift up his head tongue tied. Great? What did he say to make Eru so happy?

"Because this is sufficient reason for me to borrow Guyale from you."

When Dietrich realized what he meant, Eru has drawn his Winchester. This is the last scene he remembered while he was still conscious.

After falling Dietrich with a single air bullet, Eru made a pleased

expression and nod his head with satisfaction. Although he can sympathize with Dietrich's situation, Eru is still angry.

Eru perk himself up and scan the cockpit. Silhouette Knights are 10m tall giants, but the cockpit was tight and messy with all sorts of gears. Most prominent is the seat in the center, the control stick to the side and the pedals under the seat. The knight runner controls the Silhouette Knight by holding the control sticks and stepping on the pedals. Eru recalls the functions of the pilot seat and the activation procedure.

After Eru undo the harness and was preparing to drag the unconscious Dietrich out, he thought of something.

"If I leave him here knocked out, won't he die if wild beast attacks him?"

Although he was angry at Dietrich for running away by himself, Eru was not willing to kill him. After contemplating for a while, Eru saw some space behind the seat. The cockpit of Silhouette Knights will usually have blankets, food, first aid kit for emergency supplies, enough for a few days of solo travel if they lost contact with their team. These items are stuffed behind their seat so they won't interfere with their piloting.

"Eh, it's a bit of a waste, but I can make space here."

Eru randomly pulled out some of the items and threw them out. After confirming there is enough space, he squeeze the unconscious Dietrich in there. Although this position is uncomfortable for humans, but Eru wasn't bothered.

After 'settling' Dietrich, Eru turns towards the seat. Unfortunately, the size is designed for high schoolers. Eru won't be able to reach the control stick and pedals with his stature. The seat does not have the convenient function of being adjustable like the cars back on

earth.

Eru already anticipated this, he came with a plan in mind. He slashed at the consoles on either side of the seat calmly, destroying its casing. He is not doing this out of frustration. He pulled out silver wires from within the destroyed panels -- Silver Nerves. Eru coiled the wires around Winchester, sat down and buckle himself in. Winchester is made from white mist tree that is an excellent conductor of mana, it becomes a primitive control input device by entangling Silver Nerves around it.

"... I have to do this live with no backup plan, failure is not an option."

The Silver Nerves transmit mana and scripts through the control stick and pedals to the magic engine, which in turn uses scripts to operate the Silhouette Knight. The commands of the pilots are interpreted by the magius engine, transforming them into scripts to move each part of the Silhouette Knight. Taking this concept to the extreme, if you have great control over the scripts, you can operate the Silhouette Knights without control sticks.

But that is only in theory. It is difficult for pilots to conceptualize and control Silhouette Knights through scripts alone, so the control stick and pedals are necessary to reduce the burden on pilots and simplify the control. By having physical control sticks and pedals that matches the 4 limbs of the pilots, the movement of these controls can be used as input data for the maneuver of the robot, a semi automatic mode of control. The current way of riding a Silhouette Knights is a combination of physical control and script transmission, a balance between simplicity of control and complexity of actions that can be taken.

The problem Eru has with the Silhouette Knight lies with the difficulty in using the physical controls. That's why he plans to use total script control from the start, using his own magius circuit to

handle the large stream of control scripts. This is an absurd idea, but Eru has script processing speed beyond the realm of normal humans, so it is a worthwhile bet.

Eru took a light breath, calms down, close his eyes and concentrate.

The Winchester connects to the Magius engine through the Silver Nerves. Normally, it is the knight runner who answers the magic input query, so it did not have any resistance to the pilot assuming direct control. It was surprisingly easy to establish a bypass route. Eru's conscious became one with the Silhouette Knight, reading and processing the pre-programmed scripts in the magic engine.

Eru analyze the script with his eyes close. He construct a magic program from nothingness, growing it outwards in all directions. Arms stretch out from Eru's mind to draw the magic program -- reading its contents. Even though the code and symbols are different, but being in the flow of data is nostalgic, and he smile gently.

"Alright, time to let you see the power of a professional programmer."

He begin analyzing the core of the magic scripts at a fast pace, starting by comparing what he have learned so far with the scripts within the magius engine.

"Starting pattern analysis... Similar scripts detected, physical boost, Amplifier..."

Most of the script in the magius engine is similar to the scripts he knew. Eru identified them one at a time, using the script to understand its purpose. The more similarity there is, the faster he can grasp the internal workings.

"The base is physical boost? Crystal tissue is the emulation of muscle

tissues. To move them, the theory is the same..."

Using Architect sigils, he dissects each script. Each part forms complicated patterns and are interconnected, the magic program is expanding to the limit of his conscious.

"The control of the crystal tissue... placement, the connection between each modules, output control, this is the mana output of the ether reactor..."

Guyale which was kneeling on one knee in standby mode trembles slightly. Its fingers move, its eyes begin to focus and see the surroundings clearly.

"To activate... I will need to connect my physical boost with the movement script of the Silhouette Knight. It needs to be converted to accommodate the Silhouette Knight, using the default output control parameters to move..."

The mana produced by the ether reactor executes the script issued by the pilot, broadcast out to the entire Silhouette Knight through the Silver Nerves. The Silhouette Knight loyally obeys the command, using the mana stored in the crystal tissue to contract and expand. The machine vibrates, standing up slowly like a new-born deer.

"Operation parameter conversion complete, activation start... Adjusting output values, mana reserves adequate. Okay, take one step..."

Guyale's gigantic body balanced itself awkwardly, taking one heavy step after another, taking large but unsteady strides. The movement is like a zombie, staggering and slow.

"Feedback adjustment, optimizing."

Eru uses the feedback details from practical movements to scan for

excessive movement in the crystal tissue and debugs the script. These script still have traces of being a magic script, but errors was detected by synchronizing movement and user input, optimizing it in a short time. Guyale's movement changed from unsightly shuffling to a graceful walk in the span of a few steps.

It has been half an hour since Eru started accessing the magius engine. The Silhouette Knight, the weapon which is the crystallization of humanity's wisdom is now completely under his control.

Guyale moves as Eru wishes. There are no lags because of physical defects or inefficient scripting. It is one with the pilot, making total full control a reality.

The situation is dire.

The high school knight runners are in a deadly battle all this while, so Eru issued Guyale a command. It accepts the command and start sprinting as if to make up for all the time that was wasted.

But--

As he run, Eru's expression shift from tension to a smile. He doesn't feel anxious or pressured. The reason is simple, Eru is piloting a robot right now. The robot follows his wishes and is sprinting wildly.

Eru didn't think too much when he chased after Guyale, he was too preoccupied when accessing the magius engine. He only had the leisure to think after he started moving, coming to terms with what he is doing.

Eru thinks it is childish to react this way, but he can't contain his emotions.

"Ah, Ahhh, Ahhhhhh! Robot robot, I am piloting a running robot!"



For him, be it the tremor from each step the machine took, the Holo Monitor showing the scenery that is disappearing at an horrifying fast pace or the inertia Eru is feeling, all of it feels so blissful. Who can stop the Eru's joyous laughter? Eru forgot about the powerful demon beast that is waiting for him ahead, immersing himself in the happiness of piloting a Silhouette Knight.

Guyale ferries Eru who is forgetting about his original objective as well as the foaming and unconscious Dietrich towards the battlefield at an amazing pace..

## **Knight's & Magic Vol 1 Chapter 8**

The trees in the plain increase in number gradually until its density matches that of a forest.

A road paved with stones extends to the east in this forest; this is the biggest road in Fremmevira kingdom that leads to the east -- 'East Fremmevira highway'. From Känkänen to Jantunen is the 'West Fremmevira Highway' and from Jantunen to the kingdom's border is the East Fremmevira highway. These two highways are built with cobble stones, a historical route that was paved for the ease of transport when constructing the fortress at the front lines. It now shoulders the duty of intra-kingdom transport; its active use matches its reputation as the leading traffic junction.

The road that is used frequently by caravans with Silhouette Knight escorts is desolated. It might be due to the demon beasts stampede or the rumors spreading among merchants about the sightings of a gargantuan demon beast.

There is a tense silence on this road, which was broken suddenly.

The sounds of hooves from dozens of carriage reverberate in the air as they ferry the Laihiala pilot academy students who are escaping. The high school knight runners are risking their life to cover the evacuation, so the carriages were running at full speed. But this is too taxing on the horses, so the pace now is slower than normal. Even so, they are already halfway to Jantunen.

The exhausted students sat in the carriage. They weren't chased by any demon beast during this period. They have calmed down after some time, but the uneasiness in their chest lingers.

"What happened to Eru--?"

With this solemn atmosphere, Chid and Ady sat on the last carriage, looking behind them blankly. Eru jumped off the carriage and entered the forest when they were escaping from Cloquet's forest. It happened so suddenly that they lost track of him before they can even try to stop Eru.

"... Hey, could it be..."

Chid mumbles as if he had thought of something. Ady tilt her head questioningly.

"That guy, did he hijack a Silhouette Knight to join the fight?"

Impossible-- Ady wants to dismiss it, but fell into deep thought. The probable deduction morphs into a clear image in her mind. Common sense tells her that Eru who did not attend pilot school can't control a Silhouette Knight. But he might make it work with what he learned through self study-- She didn't know that Eru has actually succeeded. Ady easily imagined the face of Eru challenging the Land Emperor head on, it seems so natural.

"Ah-- Yeah, that makes sense. Eru will probably do that."

"No need to worry. He can run away with those legs of his if things goes awry."

The magic invented by Eru called 'Aero Thrust' is surprisingly fast. Who can catch up with Eru who is faster than wolves and rivals that of a bird? Even if the opponent is that mammoth demon beast, Eru can run away if he puts his mind to it. The two of them imagine that scene and laugh.

As they predicted, Eru has hijacked Guyale right now and is charging towards Behemoth. It is hard to tell if it is a blessing or a misfortune that the twins on the shaking carriage has no idea about this.

The instructor on the carriage in front alerts the entire convoy. Clouds of dust can be seen in the direction they are heading, and they hear the sound of horse hooves in the distance. Everyone understands what's causing all this racket. A group of Silhouette Knights-- the standard model 'Karrdator' is advancing in a column. All citizens of Fremmevira kingdom is familiar with these figures and understands why they are here.

"...The garrison knights of Jantunen!"

The voice of the instructor on the leading carriage reaches the carriages at the back. The students poke their head out of the carriages one by one, their face bright with excitement.

This group is a scale larger than two platoons, consisting of roughly 90 Silhouette Knights. They are followed by the maintenance and supplies corps. Most of Jantunen's military forces are here, the most they can muster one day after receiving the envoy from Balguerie.

Karrdators are the official mass produced standard model, with rugged exterior. After experiencing many battles, it has a unique charm to it. Their shoulder armor is decorated with the Fremmevira Kingdom flag and the Jantunen city crest, displaying the pride they have in protecting this land.

The Laihiala students are not uneasy anymore. No matter how mighty the demon beast is, the band of knights will defeat it. They have faith in the power and credibility of the knights.

A sense of relief spreads among the knights who discovered the carriage at the same time. Although they have set off as soon as possible, but they have already prepared themselves mentally to the possibility of the entire Laihiala student body being massacred. From the looks of things, most of them made it out safely, and have brought with them valuable information about the current location of behemoth.

"I see... the high school knight runners..."

It includes information on why the Laihiala students can evacuate safely. A lot of the knights are graduates of Laihiala pilot academy, and are moved by the honorable actions of their juniors and steel themselves.

"Please rest assured. In order to protect our kingdom, and not let their sacrifice be in vain, we will crush the enemy."

The Jantunen knights engrave this determination within their hearts, their morale grows stronger than before. The band of knights learned that the Laihiala students met the behemoth less than half a day ago, so their meeting with the behemoth is at hand. The tension of the knights grow sky high with each step they take.

A red Silhouette Knight is sprinting wildly in the lush forest. Its speed is incredible, double that of a normal Silhouette Knight.



Because Eru is controlling with magic scripts, he is now in sync with the magius engine. His thoughts are converted into scripts that were transmitted to the entire machine body without any lag. The crystal tissue of the Silhouette Knight is being moved, its reaction speed is better than organic muscles, executing commands without delays. Guyale's now has double the reaction speed and movement speed of a standard Silhouette Knight.

Guyale maintains its peak performance as it run, and hears the sound of howls in front. It was a mix of lightning explosion and raging winds. He will engage behemoth in a few minutes. Eru's expression twisted with joy, showing unrestrained happiness as he begins his first battle in a Silhouette Knight.

With a dull thud of metal on metal, the steel giant was knocked into the sky. It flew under the tremendous force and hit the ground hard, tumbling a few rounds. No one can spare the effort to confirm the safety of the pilot, but from the way it lands, the caved in torso and the smashed arms, the pilot can't be unharmed.

"Damn!"

The high school knight runners kept on fighting after the middle schoolers evacuated. It's not that they didn't want to run, they don't have the luxury of showing their back to behemoth. The battle has raged on for some time, compared to the fatigue showing on the pilot's faces, the behemoth live up to its name of being a fortress, showing no signs of slowing down. There is also an overwhelming difference in strength between them, the discrepancies in endurance is surfacing with each passing second.

Facing pressure that the knights at the borders failed to withstand, the high school pilot's machine fell one by one, there are only 3 left.

Behemoth's tail swing towards Earlecumber whose pilot Edgar was distracted by his comrade's demise. Edgar instinctively felt that he

can't dodge the tail bending like a whip and push the stance of Earlecumber as low as possible while swinging the shield on his left arm, parrying the blow. An incredible technique only Edgar who is the elite in high school can pull off with the help of Earlecumber's excellent performance. But the shield was knocked away from his hand with just the tail's glancing blow. Earlecumber cautiously steadied its stance and pull away from behemoth.

(I lost my shield! This is bad, the situation is desperate!)

Even so, Earlecumber's damage is slight, the other two machine's mana pool and damage is at their limit and might expire any second now. Edgar can't shake off the foreboding sense of doom that flashed across his mind. His team couldn't hold on much longer and might be wiped out in 5 minutes...

Behemoth didn't let up its attack, shooting out tornado breath again. The raging wind has a large area of effect, they could be pulled in if they don't get further away.

"Please... Trandorches, move!"

Helvi realized that the tornado breath was aimed at her and scream like a banshee as she tries to get away. Trandorches squeeze out its last ounce of strength despite the accumulated fatigue and damage, but lost its balance because of the fierce air current.

"Helvi! -- Damn it, make it in time!"

Edgar roars, commanding Earlecumber to charge at behemoth who is in turn closing in on Helvi in order to distract it. He hung on to a glimmer of hope and fires his Silhouette Arms, Arquebus. His full power attack bounces harmlessly off the armored shell while behemoth is still locked onto the Silhouette Knight before it. The running behemoth accelerates, closing in on Trandorches that is struggling to stand.



Just as Helvi and even Edgar was prepared for the next victim to appear--

"Ah hahahaha! Hue hahaha! Found it -- I am here!"

A red Silhouette Knight intrudes into the battle field with arrogant laughter. The first thing he saw in the forest is behemoth that is about to run over the robot lying on the ground.

Guyale increase its speed instantly, rushing to behemoth's left flank like a scarlet bullet. It draws its sword on the way and lunge without thinking -- concentrating his power at a single point, aiming at one of the few weak points of the demon beast known as a fortress, which is it's eyes.

Guyale not only moved at a speed beyond normal machines, and it is accurate and precise.

Before Guyale's blade reach behemoth, it noticed the red figure -- because of that, it turns its head on reflex. The distance is too close to avoid, Guyale's sword accurately caught up with the eyeball on behemoth's turned head. The sword looks as if it was drawn in, stabbing at the eyeball and colliding with the shell.

This is a pure coincidence.

The shell that should be protecting the behemoth's eyes had a slit. That was a crack a certain knight inflicted with the cost of his life half a month ago.

If behemoth didn't move and took the hit, this blow will probably be deflected by the shell covering it. But because it turned its head, the sword coincidentally pierced in from the gap.

Guyale used double the speed of a Silhouette Knight and attack with

a stab that focuses its entire metallic body weight. The sword screeches and sparks flew because of the friction as it penetrates the pupil of the giant beast. Eru thought his concentrated fatal attack will reach till the hilt, but it snapped in two loudly and shatters.

The surprise attack took out that eye, but it didn't reach into the skull. The sword can't withstand the impact of their collision and fractures.

Eru let go of the sword when he realized it broke and leap into the air to avoid hitting the behemoth head on. Guyale slip pass the behemoth's charge with its massive body, spinning in mid air, followed by 2 back somersaults when it lands, pulling away from the behemoth before stopping.

The behemoth let out an angry howl that was never heard before. Blood sprays out profusely from its left eye socket, something it has never experienced permeate its body. The defense of the behemoth is top class among demon beast, and doesn't suffer injuries even when attacked. The pain of its eyes being pierced and losing half its field of vision is a setback it has seldom experienced.

Behemoth's remaining right eye is bloodshot as it searches for the accursed enemy that took its left eye. It lost interest in everything else, the only thing that matters is the red figure he last saw with its left eye.

The high school knight runners forgot they are still in a battle field as they stare at the scene before them dumbfounded. They can't keep up with the development. They thought Guyale abandoned them, but it is back with amazing speed, and broke through the invulnerable shell of behemoth and blinded it.

The giant beast before them is howling furiously as it took aim at the red machine. It is only concerned about Guyale, ignoring Edgar

and the others.

"Right, Helvi!"

Edgar rush to the downed robot while behemoth is distracted. The exhausted Trandorches is damaged and can't walk properly. But Edgar is relief that Helvi is still alive.

Edgar felt a tremor and took a stance with Earlecumber. He then realized that behemoth is charging at Guyale with an angry howl. The one eye behemoth is even swifter than before, but Guyale is more agile. Edgar question his eyes, the Guyale he knows have never displayed such a performance before.

He even doubts whether Dietrich is piloting it. But he didn't have the time to worry about that. If Guyale can dodge behemoth's fierce attacks, that means Edgar has time to rescue his wounded comrades.

(Sorry Di, please hold him off for a while longer...!)

They turned their back to the scarlet robot dancing with the giant beast, leaning on each other as they escape.

Edgar didn't know Ernesti is piloting Guyale or what his situation is like. Inside Guyale, Eru is gleefully staring at the holo monitor that is displaying the approaching colossal body.

"So this is a behemoth, a demon beast and battle. This is... using a Silhouette Knight! To battle!"

A ferocious smile appears on his face.

His surprise attack yield results beyond his expectation. But the wounded and bloodied giant beast harbors even stronger killing

intent and charge at Eru. With majesty comparable to mountains, it closes in with murderous intent and power that twist the very scenery. Even though the scene before him is enough to scare off veteran knights, Eru only felt intense joy.

"Come at me, come at me, come on come on!"

-- Piloting robots and fighting massive enemies.

The dream of every robot nerd. Is there anyone who doesn't wish for this? He has no intention of backing down, to move away from his happiness. Driven by the elation of his body, his chosen action is--

"Come on, I'm going ahead!"

Guyale bend slightly and run at behemoth while kicking up earth with each step.

To close the gap in an instant. The moment before impact, Guyale disappears from behemoth's vision. Behemoth, which lost an eye didn't notice, charging at Guyale's old position. Guyale jumped a second before they collide, kicked off the behemoth's uneven armored shell and jump over it. For the blinded behemoth with limited field of vision, catching Guyale is mission impossible. Eru somersault in mid air deftly as he thinks.

"Ah, ah ah, amazing! A shell with no gaps and weak points, invincible armor! It is too tough, even slashing at it with a running start won't help, magic attack is useless too. Alright, just use one of the cliché in destroying massive weapons!"

Eru mumbles nonsensically with heightened emotions, bending his knees smoothly to lessen the landing impact and draw Guyale's spare sword.

"The weak points of massive guys are usually legs and joints. Let's

start there!"

Guyale use his running momentum and stab with terrifying accuracy at the back of the kneecaps, aiming for the gap between the shells. This attack hit the muscles behind the shell, but it felt tougher than imagined. Eru notice it and pulls out the sword, retreating from behemoth.

"Hmm -- it didn't go in! Other than the shell, is the rest of the body this tough too?"

Eru didn't expect the behemoth's physical boost to raise the endurance of internal tissues. To support its massive weight, behemoth must focus on strengthening its four limbs, which is obvious and a nightmare for its foe.

Behemoth was agitated by the injury to its hind leg and turned around. Even a slight glaze from the limbs of the turning behemoth will be enough to destroy Guyale. Eru pulls further back and run out of the behemoth's sight again as he reviews his previous attack.

"I didn't harm the joints just now, but it is more effective than hacking at the shell."

Hehe -- Eru is wearing a happy cute smile for some reason. He still stands a chance, but the execution is difficult, and need tenacity and patience.

"Seems like this will be a long fight... Eh, I'm fine with that, I don't really hate that."

Eru is smiling casually in the face of the raging beast and advanced with the red robot. The battle is just beginning.

(Ug... Hmmmm...?)

'He' finally wakes.

He sees a dark space in front. As his dull conscious clears, he feels a pain from his uncomfortable body posture.

"Uguu... here... here is..."

He tries to resume a normal position in the cramped space and groans, but a special pressure pins him to the wall in front.

He let out a muffled scream, the pressure clears his mind. What he felt was inertia -- A familiar sensation for all knight runners. But the inertia he felt was stronger than he remembered. This must be the pilot seat of the Silhouette Knight. When he thought about this -- Dietrich Cunitz recalls the last image from his memory. That's right, a short junior appear before him, and--

He hastily assumes a normal position and lifts his head from the back of the seat. The first thing he saw was the looming behemoth that filled the entire holo monitor.

"Gyaaaaahhhh!?"

You can't blame him for screaming like a slaughtered chicken. He saw the close up of the ferocious beast straight after waking up. The sudden scream surprised Ernesti and he almost lost control.

"Oh no! Ha!"

After recovering from a tripping position, Guyale slides to the left of the charging behemoth, evading it safely. Eru pulled away from the behemoth and glance behind before the behemoth gets ready to charge.

"Eh -- good morning senpai. We are in a life and death situation, so

please keep quiet."

Dietrich jaws drop after listening to his calm tone that contradicts its contents. The words sound logical, but he can't understand why is he back here when he should have ran far away, his head is full of questions.

"You... you! Are... you insane!? No, before that, why are you fighting!?"

He have loads of questions to ask, but has to shut his mouth as Guyale starts to run.

Behemoth's furious face fills the whole holo monitor. The giant beast is emitting a much more murderous air compared to his prior escape. This is beyond the extent of chasing obstacles away, but raging killing intent. Guyale is moving at a speed that is faster than anything the knight runner Dietrich has experienced, dodging the massive beast's attack by a hair's breadth. After seeing several scenes of imminent death, Dietrich didn't care about appearance and is on the verge of tears. He suppressed his voice and gritted his teeth, enduring it with a pitiful face. He knows if he said anything that distracts Eru, Guyale might really be done in.

(What... is this!? What's happening!? Is this my punishment for running off alone?)

「怎麼  
回事!!」



飛散在半空中。



Although he didn't know, the other machines are either destroyed or fallen back, there is only Guyale battling alone here. It is ironic that the situation is the opposite of what happened when he fled. If Eru who is piloting the machine fights on, Dietrich can't escape again.

(Seems like I am fated to stay here... Why did he bring me along? He wants me to see the fight till the very end? He wants the man... who abandoned his comrades to watch?)

Eru can't leave him behind even if he wants to -- Dietrich won't be able to guess the truth. The titanic beast didn't care about Dietrich's feeling and the battle between the two rages on.

Behemoth uses its devastating strength to shatters the earth, its tornado breath uproots the trees. A glancing blow from these will be enough to kill, but Guyale that is piloted by the petite youth is evading them happily and is even counter attacking the limbs of the beast.

Dietrich lost his cool when he woke up, but has gathered himself now and perplexed by another issue. Unbelievably, the young pilot is a match with the giant beast, although he is on the defensive. Because Dietrich was the pilot of Guyale, he understands how amazing this is. The performance of this machine is average, the training robot in Laihiala pilot academy are 2nd rate equipment anyway. This is clear since the other Silhouette Knights piloted by high schoolers can't match the beast.

The problem lies with this pilot. Dietrich also knows this short 1st years that shows up at pilot school occasionally. He would have never believed this small youth had such outstanding piloting skills. But since he is taking the beast on right now, Dietrich have to give in.

(Too amazing, no, that is an inadequate description. This is 'strange'... But if I... If we want to survive, I have let him battle

on...!)

Dietrich fell into the chasm of despair once, but he saw hope in the scene before him. A sense of longing grows in the feeble youth who lost to himself.

In Dietrich's eyes, Guyale and Eru are fighting a steady battle. But in reality, they are not doing that well. There are two big and pressing issues.

First is the mana pool of Guyale. The maximum time a Silhouette Knight can fight at full strength is 1 hour under normal conditions. Anymore and the mana supply will not be able to keep up with the usage rate, leading to diminishing performance. It has been 2 hours since Guyale started the battle... This mean it has kept up peak performance in double the time.

This is thanks to Eru's delicate control and his grasp of the operating system. The optimization of the script lowers the mana consumption rate, limiting the usage of mana in tissues not in operation to conserve energy. Also, he is not running Guyale at full power all the time, and includes breaks for Guyale to 'breath' and restore mana. His actions looked intense at first sight, but he has been secretly minimizing consumption rate once he decided to fight a long battle.

But that is still not enough, he has exhausted half his mana reserve. If this goes on, he can optimistically hang on for about 2 hours.

Next will be the weapon's wear and tear.

After attacking behemoth repeatedly for 2 hours, Guyale's blade is twisted and full of cracks, making the attacks that causes minimal damage even less effective. There is also the magic armament, but Guyale's 'Chasm' <kanji: wind blade> is not suitable for pin point attack.

Eru considered programming an overed spell, but doing that while controlling the Silhouette Knight is too great of a burden, especially if it is tactical level magic. He gave that up but his morale is still high, although the lacks of attacking means made him feel helpless.

(If I knew this will happen, I would have armed myself with several swords like a porcupine.)

Even though he is upset, Eru persist with his battle tactic. Or rather, he can't change it. Guyale relies mainly on evasion while looking for a chance to win.

As the battle went on, even Dietrich noticed the frequency of counters is dropping. If they just want to survive, dodging will be fine, but they will lose in terms of endurance. If they plan to escape, they have to use this chance to attack the giant beast's legs and lower its mobility. And attacking is a possibility with Eru's piloting skills. But Eru has let a number of opportunities go.

(Why are you not countering...! If you keep running like this, our chances of escaping will fall!)

Dietrich anxiety rises as he can only watch. As a knight runner, Dietrich knows Silhouette Knights can't fight for long. He chose a time when Eru has evaded an attack and asked:

"Hey... Hey, Ernesti, you have not been countering for a while, what's wrong!?"

Eru was slightly surprised when the Dietrich who has been quiet suddenly spoke. But Eru explained the situation.

"Behemoth is too hard, the sword is tattered. The attacks are not damaging it."

Dietrich stole a glance at the sword through the holo monitor, the

blade is twisted badly and is totally blunt. Dietrich moans.

(Need to think... find a weapon... we made it so far, we can't die now!)

He searched frantically from the scene displayed on the holo monitor for something that can be used as a weapon. Ernesti is piloting Guyale, but there are things Dietrich can do as well. Dietrich is finally back on the battle field by his own will, his state of mind has changed drastically without him noticing, and his participation yield great results. Eru is also scanning the surroundings as he fights, but he has to dodge behemoth's charges, so he can't focus too much on the surroundings. That's why Dietrich is the one who noticed 'that'. He shouted loudly when he discovered it:

"Besides the fallen Silhouette Knight! Take its weapon!"

Eru took just a second to look at the spot Dietrich pointed at and saw a Silhouette Knight that has broken down. Eru comprehends Dietrich's intention, accelerating after evading behemoth with a low posture almost hugging the ground. Eru charge forward and pick up a sword from the fallen robot. Since the high school pilots mainly used Silhouette Arms to attack, there is almost no damage on the sword. An invincible smile returns to Eru's face.

"Thank you senpai. I have been troubled because of my weapons."

"No... No need for thanks, just carry on fighting the behemoth!"

Eru faced the behemoth immediately and reevaluate its status. Its legs are bleeding after numerous slashes, meaning the damage it took is not trivial.

"Okay, mana pool is less than 50%. If I don't take down a leg, it will probably catch up if we escape."

Guyale raise its new sword and begin its counter attack. Behemoth is massive, but is bad with intrinsic movements, so its natural enemy is Guyale which uses speed and precision as its weapons.

Behemoth uses its endless stamina to rampage. Although it has been attacking nonstop, it has yet to land a single hit. Guyale on the other hand is dealing damage consistently to the giant beast. The wounds on behemoth's leg is significant. Dripping water can hollow a stone. With its eyes and limbs bleeding, even the fortress demon beast behemoth is slowing down.

Dietrich was the one to notice again.

Eru heard a shout from behind and scan the surrounding quickly and saw many Silhouette Knights. He won't miss that even if it is just a glance. These are 'Karrdators' that are synonymous to Silhouette Knights in Fremmevira Kingdom. They are spread out, surrounding Guyale and behemoth in layers. After seeing their machine model and the flying flags, they understand their identity.

"Karrdator!? Ah, ahhh... that flag... Its Jantunen garrison knights! Reinforcement is here to rescue us!"

(They are here... sooner than I expected, I thought it will take a bit longer before I can escape and rendezvous with everyone.)

Eru quickly thought about his next course of action. Guyale can still fight, but the mana pool is below 30%, it is at a critical juncture. Since the Calvary is here, there is no point in buying time and let the knights take over and retreat. The firepower of Guyale alone is not enough, the forces here should do. He was just stalling for time when facing the giant beast just now, but the time to 'defeat' it has arrived.

The gargantuan beast is not concerned with the situation around it,

stubbornly chasing Guyale. Eru dodges easily, luring behemoth to turn its back to the knights. He then slipped past the left side of the behemoth where it is blinded and dash towards the formation of the knights. The band of knights probably understood Guyale's intentions and aimed with their Silhouette Arms.

The giant beast only had an eye for the detestable red figure, and is finally being led to the stage of the final battle.

A short time before the knights arrived at the battle field.

Several Silhouette Knights travels deftly in the forest instead of the stone pavement of Fremmevira's highway. They are the scouts of the Jantunen garrison knights, their mission is reconnaissance the status of the behemoth before the main party arrives.

After bashing into the forest from the highway, they found the density of the forest to be very high. Compared to using carriages and traveling by the highway, the team travels much faster by cutting through the forest. Behemoth is much closer to the highway than the position reported by the students, so the scouts completed their mission and report back in no time.

"Is that so? This is right ahead of us... Behemoth not taking the highway is a silver lining."

Philip Hallhagen comments after listening to the scouting report. He was prepared to fight the behemoth on the highway if the situation calls for it, but that wasn't necessary. But his face turns stiff as he listened to the next report.

"We have linked up with 3 of the training robots, there is still one more engaged in battle..."

The high schooler's Silhouette Knights retreated from battle because of Guyale's intrusion made it to the highway and is being protected by the garrison knights. Trandorches and another machine was critically damaged, and is sent to the maintenance crew at the back for major overhaul. The remaining Earlecumber suffers minor damage and joined the fighting ranks after receiving simple repairs.

The robot still in battle was Guyale. When the scouts saw the scarlet knight, it was attacking with fearsome might. The scouts did not know how to report this, so they just gave the position of the beast and the fact that a machine was engaging it.

Philip and Gottfried plans the operation based on the gathered intelligence and relays the orders to all units. Their plan is as follows: They will spread out by squad level (9 machines) around the target in a semicircle. From the intelligence of the students who fought it, it is judged that close quarter combat with the giant beast is very dangerous, so they will be using Silhouette Arms and attacking in waves from a distance to damage the behemoth.

They have also drawn up contingencies for the behemoth's charging and tornado breaths. They are expecting casualties, so the worse scenario will be the targeted squad will act as bait and stop behemoth's movement while the others move in for the kill. The knights move into the forest with the resolve to risk death in battle.

The howl of the mammoth beast makes the forest tremble.

As the knights move into position, the beast keeps turning in circles at the same spot, rampaging painfully. The knights were confused by this and were dumbfounded when they saw the reason. They see a red Silhouette Knight moving at incredible speed as the giant beast chases it with blood gushing out of an eye and howls with anger.

"What, what is that..."

The beast can shatter the Silhouette Knight with one blow, but the scarlet machine is using its superior speed to toy with it. Even the commander with his elite skills doubts whether he can match that speed. Everyone was impressed and sighs at this display. They understand that the giant beast is staying in place because it is persistently chasing the scarlet machine. It was too focused on the enemy before it and lost track of its surroundings.

This is a great chance for the knights.

Suddenly, the red robot notices the knights and stops. In the next instance, it lures the behemoth to turn its back to the knights and slip past the flank of the beast towards the knights. Philip grasped its intention and commands his entire force:

"Scarlet Knight... Thank you! Don't let this chance slip away! Everyone, ready your Culverin <TL:kanji is Spear of flame>!"

Receiving the command from Philip who lifted his sword, the Karrdators readies its magic armament 'culverin'. Their objective is to attack in unison with magic, using their numbers to overwhelm the enemy.

The red machine did not slow down, slipping to the back of the formation. Philip swings his sword down as it pass through the last ranks.

"All units, fire!"

The knights anticipated this signal and shot out flames on cue at the behemoth with their culverins. The high pitch sound reverberates as fire trails flash through the sky towards the center of the semi circle, raining down at the mountain sized monster.

Countless flaming lance pierce at the behemoth who was engrossed with the scarlet knight. The overed spell flaming lance explodes in



columns of flames like a lotus within the forest. The tongues of flame engulf the entire beast, the fire is so big that they can't see what is happening. Even so, the knights did not slow down their persistent attack.

Guyale who made it past the knights stopped at the rear of the formation to rest his machine and recover its mana pool. The machine appears to be fatigued after making through a fierce battle, the ether reactor churns noisily as it runs at full speed.

"... That's great! Well done! How, how's that? Damn demon beast, this is the power of the garrison knights! Hahaha!"

Eru frowns when he heard the maniacal laughter of Dietrich behind him. Eru didn't relax as he watches the hellish flame before him. The culverins kept up its attack and the scale of the fire is increasing gradually, determined to burn everything inside it. Even the behemoth which took pride in its defenses won't be able to escape unscathed from this attack.

(But it is not an opponent that can be dealt with so simply...)

It is impossible for the situation to go as Eru hoped and the space that is burning is changing. The fire that is burning fiercely is swirling in the form of a whirlpool. No, it is not just the flame that are swirling, but the air current about it is sucking the flames in, turning it into a tornado of fire. The knights sense that something was wrong and adopt a defensive stance, but kept up their attack.

The tornado flame finally evolved. The next second, it turns into a slithering burning snake and whips at the knights.

"What, what is that!"

The burning snake spits at the knights as it struggles, the flame that was shot out by the knights was dispersed into the surroundings.

Fortunately, the knights kept their distance when they attack, so the tornado breath was not fatal. Although they knew about the existence of the tornado breath, they didn't expect behemoth to use it inside that fiery pit, stunning the knight and disrupting their formation.

With the formation falling apart, the attack from the culverins slowed down. Behemoth realized this and kicked at the remaining fire and leap out of the fire pit. After its shell was baked in hellish flames that can melt steel, it is burning hot and several wounds can be seen on the giant beast. The injuries on its limb sustained from Guyale's slashes are burnt badly after the baptism by fire. On the whole, the colossal beast suffered serious damage.

The movement of the behemoth has also slowed significantly, but it is still known as an extraordinary tough beast with absurd endurance. The charge of the beast was enough to make the knights who are reforming scatter. Behemoth's massive body is in the middle of the reforming group. The movement of the knights is slowed because they are in the midst of forming ranks, making things worse. A number of machines was knocked away during the giant beast's advance, the robots that fell down was mercilessly trampled into lumps of junk.

Some of them tried to engage the behemoth. The shell that was weakened by the heat can be sliced by the sword, but the blade twist and shatters before it reaches the interior. Even wounded, the close quarter battle between the beast and the Silhouette Knights are hopelessly one sided, a squad of knights are forced into a corner.

Although the knights are prepared to sacrifice their life, they are unable to attack in a position that will hit their allies. The occasional magic attack stops and their 'ace' showed itself.

"Squad 2, 4 and 8, ready the 'hammer'!"

Phillips in his command machine 'Sordwort' swings his sword, his instruction gives a sense of purpose to the battle. The knights was prepared to die in this battle, and with the battle turning into a melee fight, they restrains the beast's movement and show their ace in the hole.

The Silhouette Knights carrying a massive weapon and starts running to either flanks of the behemoth. They are moving the 'Hard Crust Bunker' that requires 4 Silhouette Knights to use -- simply put, it is just a giant lump of steel in the shape of a stake.

As shown from its name, the battering ram that needs 4 Silhouette Knights to move can easily destroy a siege wall, the ace they prepared for the demon beast with the reputation of a fortress.

The battering ram is a powerful weapon, but it has the weakness of being 'slow and heavy'. It is a type of weapon that changes mass into destructive force, so it requires 4 Silhouette Knights to wield. It is also big in size, so it is a hassle to deploy or withdraw with it. To hit the demon beast, they need to seal its movement. That is the reason why the knights are deploying their ace with when the giant beast stopped its advance.

The problems with the battering ram have been briefed to all knight units, including the squad that i engaging the behemoth. They knew they can't last for long but they refuse to back down, facing the behemoth to stop its movements.

The Karrdators that are charging with the battering ram can see this scene clearly. The knight runners in their seats grip their control stick so tightly that it creaks. They step on their pedal with all their might, wanting to crash into the behemoth immediately. This is the battle where they are ready to sacrifice their lives. Even so, their wrath towards the enemy that is massacring their allies burns on. The battering ram squad roars as they charge in respond to the sacrifice of their allies.

The air intake valve plays a high pitch screech, the Karrdator charge at their maximum speed. As they close in with the beast, they are covered in the shadow of the mountain liked beast. The first battering ram reached the behemoth's side. This is not a precision weapon, so they used their momentum to aim at the biggest target which is the flank and rams it in.

The weight that requires 4 Silhouette to move has amazing destructive power. The shell being cooked by flames causing it to soften might play a part. The battering ram pierced cleanly through the shell of the behemoth into its stomach.

The stake seems to shake in that moment, the behemoth's colossal body starts to move and it howls painfully, louder than when it lost its eye. Its howl to the sky makes the ground trembles, massive amount of blood gush out from its stomach wound.

"Great! The Hard Crust Bunker is effective! Use this chance to attack and kill it!"

Cheers erupt among the knights. They know the battering ram is difficult to use, but its power can hurt a battalion level demon beast. There are 2 more teams with battering rams and they are closing in on the giant beast. The beast is still writhing in pain, not noticing their advance. The 2 teams are aiming for the head and the other flank respectively. If they hit these two places, it will be fatal even for a fortress demon beast. Most of the knights are convinced of their victory. The battering ram team that is shouldering the entire army's hope is right before its target.

The moaning and dazed behemoth suddenly looks downwards. All the knights and Eru doesn't know what this means and was perplexed. The team that is charging with the battering ram didn't notice--

The behemoth shoots a tornado breath at the ground. The fierce

wind this close to the ground digs up the earth, and the flying debris in this confined space explodes. The battering ram team was unable to evade this, the team aiming for the head was hit by flying boulders and smashed into smithereens.

Amazingly, behemoth uses its stomach to withstand the explosion and the impact of the tornado and 'stood up' with this momentum. All the knights that were maintaining the encirclement of the behemoth stared at the graphic on their holo monitor in awe. The 80m long behemoth had incredible weight, and its foreleg is completely off the ground as it stands. This bizarre situation made everyone's reaction slower by a beat.

"Oh no! Danger, get away!"

The team aiming for the stomach knew something was awry before Philip shouted and attempts to dodge. But they are carrying the heavy battering ram with them and had been charging at full speed. Even if they want to retreat, they can't stop their accelerating machine in time.

Behemoth's massive body fell with the pull of gravity right on top of them. The destructive force of the gargantuan demon beast's weight is beyond that of the battering ram. It caused a small earthquake when it lands, shattering the ground and shooting debris like a shotgun to the surroundings. The dust flew sky high, covering the beast's entire body.

The battering ram team that didn't get away in time was decimated, the ram was flattened and the Silhouette Knights were beyond recognition.

This attack was too rash, and the behemoth that used it was hurt too. More blood flows out from its gaping wound, and several cracks appears on its shell. It is not obvious, but the attack that penetrates its physical boast injured some of its internal organs, the behemoth

is also desperate.

But the knight's casualties were more severe. Including the squad that was attacked in the beginning, they have lost 40% of their forces, the flying boulders caused medium damage another 20%. And losing their ace seriously hurt the knights' morale. The attack they placed their hopes on was negated, this impact their psyche deeply. Anxiety higher than before seizes the knights.

The culverin held by the Karrdator are shaking, the movement of the knight runners was unconsciously transmitted to the machine. Not only the giant beast's power, even it's existence brings pressure that corrodes their heart.

"..."

Guyale watches the string of attack from the rear of the knights, Dietrich was trembling inside the machine. Even the special attack that sacrifices part of the knights was negated in front of the beast's strength, can they really take it down? The generous amount of fighting spirit in his heart recedes instantly. The damage to the behemoth is significant, but seeing the power he have absolute faith in failing shakes his heart. Dietrich can't make collected judgment. The thing that returns Dietrich back to normal is the angry growl from the seat in front of him.

"... Unforgivable..."

Dietrich can only see the silver hair of Ernesti sitting in the seat, but he can understand the abnormal atmosphere emitting from Eru's body.

"You dare to destroy robots before my eyes!"

"Eh?"

"The only thing permitted to destroy robots... are other robots..."

"Eh eh!?"

Eru mumbles reasons unfathomable to Dietrich as he stands Guyale up. Although he has a faint smile, his blue eyes differed from its usual shine, burning like a devil. As if it is channeling Eru's wrath, Guyale's air intake valve screech louder, the mana flows through all the crystal tissue in the body, the body encased in armor is full of power.

Mana pool is over 50%, the sword in its hand is serviceable and the machine is undamaged.

The scarlet knight took a step forward, Eru who has become a vengeful spirit returns to battle. The red Silhouette Knight charge at the giant beast, the cry of despair from Eru's passenger can be heard along the way.

The Land Emperor emerged slowly from the thick dust. Despite its body being covered in wounds, it can still move, displaying its amazing endurance. Battalion level-demon beasts are truly impressive.

On closer observation, it is on its last legs. But the knights with their devastated morale lost their will to fight when they see the behemoth is still moving. They shoot their culverin in response, but their scattered efforts are ineffective. It can't even break through the weakened shell. The encirclement of the knights that was sealing the behemoth's movement also fell apart.

Commander Philip felt a strong sense of danger from the sight before him. He has issued numerous orders, but it is not easy to build up lost morale and he is growing anxious. Suddenly, a scarlet wind pierced through the loose encirclement.

The red Silhouette Knight was prominent among the earth colored Karrdators. It made a beeline for the behemoth before anyone could react.

"That is impossible! We are doomed it can't be done the knights are here there is no escape ahhhhh!?"

Eru who is piloting Guyale didn't even look at the knights and Dietrich's nonsensical scream didn't reach their ears. Eru's deep blue eyes lock on to the behemoth.

Leaving the knights out of his mind, Eru closes in on behemoth. Even though the behemoth is heavily wounded, it howled when the red figure in its memory appears. It ignores the gushing blood and tattered shell and move its limbs.

The gap between them disappears.

The speedier Guyale has the advantage. With suffering many cracks and fractures from the previous fight, the behemoth's defense is full of breeches. The scarlet machine turns into a whirlwind, slashing repeatedly at behemoth with its speed. The sword cuts accurately through a fissure, causing sparks and screeching noise as the shell cracks and fell to the ground.

"Sword attacks are effective! This mean the enemy is at its limit!"

Guyale glides around and slash, turns back and pounce at the behemoth again, turning his evasive tactics to offense. These two have traded their position.

The knights were shocked by the scene before them. In their eyes, Guyale is a machine piloted by a Laihiala pilot academy student. A student younger than the knights is standing up to the giant beast without fear and attacking it. At a glance, it seems like foolish



bravery, but that is why it has a motivational effect that fire up the hearts of the knights.

"All units, assume encircle formation! Form new ranks! Renew the attack!"

The knights felt shame from losing heart before the demon beast's might and move with renewed conviction. The units with restored morale formed up quickly and encircled the behemoth. Each squad took note of the scarlet machine's position and started magic attack support, restraining behemoth's movement and damaging it.

The sword of the scarlet knight peeled off the shell of the beast, the culverin pierce the behemoth's legs. The attack of the giant beast is sealed and it becomes a static target board.

The table has been turned and behemoth is on the verge of defeat. This bolsters the morale of the knights and Guyale moves freely. The colossal beast finally reached its limit, its shell is dropping off from the damages and its blood turns the ground into marsh. Anyone can tell the beast has lost its ability to resist.

But an unexpected ending page was flipped.

A sudden pressure assaults Eru and Dietrich out of nowhere. As Guyale was turning its body to evade, the strength in one leg disappears and it leans heavily to one side. A strong force push the scarlet knight to the ground and Guyale's red armor was twisted and peels off, scattering in mid air.

"What happened!?"

Eru continued to control Guyale in a panic, rolling backwards and kicking off the ground with all its might. Guyale finally steadies its posture with one knee on the ground.

"The behemoth didn't hit us, so why are we hurt..."

Eru shift the machine's head to scan the status of the legs, finding the joints stiff and sees shards of crystal tissue falling out from the gaps in the armor.

Eru finally understands the situation after seeing this, this was not caused by attacks. Eru made intrinsic control possible with his full control piloting. But his high output demand made Guyale breaks under the heavy burden.

This long battle has also exceeded the operation time of a normal Silhouette Knight, which adds to the stress, damaging the legs which took the brunt of the burden. Living beings will be alerted through pain stimulus. But Silhouette Knights are robots without the function of reporting feedback on abnormality. You will only know when it exceeds the limit and suffers damage.

Eru frowns deeply. Guyale holds the advantage because it's excellent mobility. But it can't fight on with its legs busted. Eru can only abandon the machine and run for it.

There is not much time left for him to worry about this. Behemoth is rushing at the hated red machine as usual.

The culverins fired by the knights rain down on behemoth as they try to save the scarlet machine that suddenly kneeled down, but it didn't stop the giant beast. Behemoth's remaining right eye is bloodshot and full of hatred, an angry howl came from its mouth. The shattered shell and flowing blood didn't even faze it, the demon beast charge with the conviction to decimate everything. Its speed is much slower, but it is a death sentence for the immobile Guyale.

(To break down at this timing... It's a pity, but I have to escape.)

With his capabilities, Eru can get out of the giant beast's range once

he abandons the machine.

(That's right, if... it is just me.)

Eru can do it, but Dietrich behind him can't. Eru release the harness and stare at behemoth on the holo monitor. There is no time left, the charge will shatter Guyale. Eru's thinking speed reached its peak.

(It is not good for my conscience to leave senpai here... But it is not easy to survive this.)

He desperately went through all sorts of possibility. What Ernesti can do, what Dietrich can do and what Guyale can do.

(... There is a way, but it is a gamble. There is only one chance, the chips are our lives... But to die with a robot is an acceptable way to go out with a bang.)

That's the best a robot nerd can hope for. Eru has no hesitation in choosing this insane option. To risk his life and fight the giant beast.

"Senpai, can you hear me?"

Eru's calmness doesn't match the situation before them. Will Dietrich sitting at the back listen? He is already in despair over their fate, mumbling as he pants. He is not acting normal.

"If you hear me, please switch with me and take over the control."

Eru tone is the same, but the strange aura in his voice made Dietrich trembles in fear.

Eru ignores him, pulling Winchester and the silver nerves to the front, almost hitting the holo monitor. Leaving the empty seat.

"It's hopeless! What can I do by piloting..."

"It doesn't matter. Sit on the chair now if you want to live."

Dietrich reacts to the words 'if you want to live'. He is on the verge of breaking down, but he still slides into the seat.

"Shit... Shit! What are we doing! What can we do!?"

"I will only say this once, so listen carefully. First..."

Part of the silver nerve was pulled along with the Winchester, but several of them are still connected to the control stick. It can still be operated normally. Once he confirms Dietrich is holding the control stick, Eru release his control from the magius engine's domain.

Behemoth is right in front of them. It is critically wounded with nowhere to run, but its massive body is still imposing, filling their entire field of vision. Eru takes a deep breath and stares at the figure in the holo monitor and concentrates.

He push his unique skill 'the processing speed that can fully control a Silhouette Knight' to the limit and program a large scale script. It's an overed spell in scale, similar to those used by Silhouette Knights but larger.

He has a bigger mana pool than others as he has trained nonstop since childhood. But that is the standard for humans, not enough to execute tactical level spells. Even if he can process and construct the script, he can't use tactical level magic. But he is sitting on a large supply of mana right now. That's right, mana from Guyale.

Silhouette Knight can't construct magic alone. Eru don't have the mana for tactical level spells. But they can cover its others weakness and Eru is executing this never seen before plan.

"~~~...!~...!!!"

Dietrich screamed without realizing it. Fear made him stiff, but Dietrich believes the young boy before him and acts.

Eru focus on processing. Creating a large and powerful spell to the limit.

Behemoth's head is like a protruding boulder, closing in on Guyale to smash it. Their distance is close enough to make out the details on the behemoth's skin.

Everything that follows happens in an instant.

Guyale extends its arms as if to hug behemoth and creates an air bullet but did not fire it out, constructing an air bag. Eru uses the magic he conjured to decelerate when moving at high speed, 'air suspension' and enlarged it to tactical level.

The air cushion he made collides with the impact of the demon beast's charge. The compressed air was squeezed even tighter from the collision. A force that is still tremendous after hitting the air bag pushes at Guyale. The pressure deforms the armor and blow away crystal shards.

"Now! Jump back--!"

Eru opens his eyes and shout. He heard a reaction from Dietrich. Dietrich didn't think about the content of the instruction and react on reflex -- extending his legs and push down hard on the pedal. Guyale's leg is broken and can't walk, but the crystal tissues that are still working executes the command faithfully and expends all its energy.

Behemoth has broken through the air cushion and is about to pierce

the scarlet knight -- Guyale leaps back recklessly at this moment. The crystal tissues in the legs snap completely, but it completed its task.

"It's not over! Hang on! Hard skin!"

Eru's operation is not over, he cast armor hardening spell on Guyale's front armor. At this moment, behemoth's head touch Guyale and the hit lands.

Weakening the impact with air cushion, minimizing the force by jumping back and defending with hardening magic. Even with this, it didn't negate the force of the blow as the armor dents and the pieces surrounding it breaks and flies off. The holo monitor in front of the pilot seat shatters, making Eru gasp.

"It is not enough after doing all this...!"

All his effort was negated, making him think about giving up. But a small blessing aided him -- The training machine used by Laihiala pilot academy place its priority on pilot safety, so the torso armor is made thicker. The front armor reinforced by Eru's magic stays true to this priority, denting heavily but still withstood the behemoth's strike, protecting its passenger completely.

Anyone would think the red machine is lost, but Guyale looks like it is hugging the head of behemoth, still retaining its humanoid shape. Behemoth was baffled by the knight that didn't fall apart from its charge. The attack still carries on, behemoth advance and push Guyale along.

"... If we make it through."

The time to strike back is here.

Eru grabs the control stick and move Guyale's body. He only moves

the robot's right wrist and lift it up and punch at behemoth's head. No matter how weak the shell is, the body of the giant beast will not be damaged by bare hands. But the arm is not aiming for the shell, but the left eye socket.

A broken half of a sword is stuck in there. Eru grabs the broken sword and activate all the remaining mana in Guyale's crystal tissue. He overrides all safety limiters, emptying all mana reserves, using all his processing power to construct the largest spell.

"Checkmate!"

After uttering this phrase softly, the largest scale lightning the world has ever seen channel through Guyale's arm into the broken sword, striking the behemoth's head directly.

Behemoth is a living being and has a brain in its head. The lightning through the eye socket is conducted through the optical nerves and the blood vessels, hitting the brain directly. The large current ravaged the brain of the behemoth, frying the interior components. Even the giant beast can't take it when its brain which is the control hub of living things burns.

The Land Emperor finally took its last breath.

The electric current continues to burn the nerves, making the behemoth spasm and jerk. That flings off Guyale that was hugging the head onto the ground. Guyale has exhausted its mana pool, so it can't even harden its structure, breaking into pieces on impact with the ground.

-- The giant beast collapse to the ground slowly.

Death comes to the powerful beast that rampaged. The ending was brutal and sudden, everyone was silent. When they comprehend the demon beast will not move again, joy spread among the knights in

waves. It didn't take long for them to cheer in victory.

"... It was dangerous till the very end, any mistake and we will turn into minced meat."

The decimated Guyale was in a pitiful state. The limbs have fallen off, the inner skeleton is breaking apart with the connection magic gone. Every piece of armor is battered and there is only bits of red paint left. The pilot seat was also shaken up, but Eru cast air suspension with his own mana to absorb the impact safely. Dietrich was almost crushed to death from the pilot seat's reaction force, but that was better than becoming minced meat for real.

Although this was a plan that might kill them along with the behemoth, Eru was relieved to have survived. He let out a long sigh and shows a gloomy expression.

"...Ahhh... in pieces... Guyale is in pieces..."

Eru ignores the unconscious Dietrich whose pupil has turned up and shakes his head, worrying about the wrong priorities.

"Ahh, I can't stay depressed. Guyale, I will fix you up, please wait for me!"

Eru made a strange resolution and left the half destroyed cockpit.



## **Knight's & Magic Vol 1 Chapter 9**

The sound of timber cracking can be heard repeatedly. The source is the mountain of mass-- the carcass of the Land Emperor.

When the behemoth died, the mana supply powering the physical boost magic stops. The massive body over 80m in length can't withstand its own weight and collapsed on itself. The shell armor that suffered countless cracks in the course of battle crumbles, the struts holding the body up crumbles one by one, the height falls slowly. The lower half of the body that supports the heavier weight is in shambles.

The Jantunen garrison knights cheer as the giant beast crumbles further, shooting their Silhouette Arms into the air with pride.

But the knights suffered serious casualties. That's why the ones who survived have to sing their victory song loudly as a tribute for those who fell in battle.

Some distance from the knights, 3 Silhouette Knight is advancing. Among the band of Karrdator knights, these 3 have a different appearance and stands out from the crowd.

One is the command Silhouette knight 'Sordwort' piloted by the commander Philip. Compared to the Karrdators that focus on practicality, it has a prominent regal appearance and is covered in plate armor.

Besides him is the vice commander's 'Cardiaria', a Karrdator that has been reinforced.

Behind them is the training machine from Laihiala pilot academy, 'Earlecumber'. Its appearance is crude, but it is covered in pure white armor, giving it a different aesthetic compared to Karrdator.

They walk pass the behemoth that is still crumbling and approach their target. The closer they get, the clearer the pieces with red paint is.

-- Scattered around here is the remains of the Silhouette Knight Guyale.

The first thing Philip who is leading the way saw was Guyale's right arm. Its skeletal structure was broken and it is bent out of shape. The trio glanced at it and continued without a word, finally reaching their main objective. The torso without its head and limbs, the armor is in shambles, the crystal tissue has been utterly destroyed. The armor protecting the chest cavity has caved in, the whole torso is misshapen. The strong frontal armor is a twisted lump, showing how strong the impact is.

(I did think it will be like this... From the looks of things, the knight runner inside... It's hopeless...)

No one made a sound, thinking about the same thing. They had some hope, but if the impact shatters the torso, it is impossible for the pilot to survive.

Philip and Gottfried stares silently at the holo monitor. The scarlet knight from Laihiala pilot academy fought the behemoth to the last moment to protect its juniors. Compared to the knights who were on the verge of collapse, it was on the very front lines. It battles the giant beast like a burning torch of courage, taking down the behemoth with its life. Philip wonders what the pilot is like? The pilot should be a student, but his future is immeasurable. The skills to take down a behemoth, the virtuous attitude to risk his life for others and the indomitable spirit to overcome the odds. He possessed the 3 characteristics a knight should have. Philip have not converse with him before, but Philip gives a silent prayer for the hero who sacrificed himself honorably.

Earlecumber moved ahead and kneels beside Guyale.

Earlecumber's front armor opens with the sound of compressed air jetting out. Edgar stands on the armor, silently looking at the remains for a while before saying

"Di... I am late, but I still want to apologize... back then, I thought you abandoned us and escaped."

Unlike his calm tone, Edgar's expression was twisted with regret.

"I lost all respect for you at that moment... But I empathize with you too. The scenario was too dire then, I told myself 'Di won't work with us in this situation'. But... You came back."

Edgar clenched fist are trembling.

"And so... Sorry Dietrich. I don't know why you are hiding your real strength. Even so, you sacrificed yourself to save us..."

Edgar's monologue was interrupted by an explosion. Shortly after, Guyale's chest armor flew into the sky before him.

The chest armor flew and made an arc through the sky and rolls loudly when it lands.

The 3 robots followed the movement of the chest armor that blasted off and looked back at the remains by their feet. A short figure climbs out from the cockpit as they watch in awe.

"The front armor can't open because it is bent out of shape. That took some effort to get out... Eh? What's wrong everyone?"

"... Huh?"

Jantunen was under high alert because the deployment of the entire garrison knights, but the gates are fully open to welcome the return of the knights. The victorious garrison knights returns in an orderly fashion, advancing slowly on the main street.

News of the behemoth's invasion has spread throughout the whole kingdom with the deployment of the knights. The citizens who were trembling from fear cheer with reckless abandon for those who returned safely. Their excitement matches that of winning a war, and in reality, defeating a behemoth successfully has more value than winning a war.

Something followed the advance of the parade and the crowd was silenced when it enters the gate. That was the head of the demon beast which is much larger than a Silhouette Knight. A carriage ferries the intimidating head, even the citizens that didn't saw it move knows its threat. The silence spreads, and suddenly explodes in cheers twice as loud.

Everyone is singing the exploit of the knights, deepening their respect for their guardian garrison knights. Jantunen's parade reached its climax at this point.

Some distance away from main street, a quiet cafe is isolated from the bustle of the city. Most of the citizens were gathered around main street, leaving the cafe empty. There are just a few youths patronizing the shop, there are people related to this incident: Edgar, Stefania, Archid, Adeltrud and Ernesti.

"Really! You are too reckless..."

Edgar sighs and lowers the teacup in his hand. He is saying this on behalf of everyone present. He can't help himself from commenting after hearing Eru casually describe his actions during the Land Emperor incident.

"This makes me sympathized the 'victim' who was dragged in, Di..."

After hacking into the magius engine, Eru exerts full control over the machine and fought. Just listening to this is enough to make anyone with common sense faint after screaming. The more detailed Eru's explanation, the more troubled Edgar gets. Stefania eyes are wide open and her surprise is evident. Chid and Ady are stunned, but accepts it since it is Eru. The twins look at each other and says:

"See, he hijacked a Silhouette Knight as expected."

"You two, what do you mean by 'expected'? Although you are right."

Eru looks unhappy, but avert his eyes guiltily when the twins glares back.

Apart from Eru, Edgar is the only one with experience piloting Silhouette Knights. That's why he was shocked after listening to Eru, but was convinced. From what he remembers, Guyale's performance was not that outstanding. If Eru didn't hack in, it wouldn't have been that powerful. But even with the facts right before him, Edgar just shakes his head. He suddenly thought of something.

"Ernesti, if Di didn't ran, what did you plan to do?"

"Nothing. I just went with the flow back then, I would probably have boarded the carriage and escaped."

Edgar's face sours. What would have happened if Guyale didn't join the fray? Edgar won't be sitting here in that case, and the knight's casualty will probably double. Not only that, the behemoth might not be defeated. Without question, a medal of honor should be awarded to the petite youth in front of Edgar, but rewarding his outstanding performance is an issue because of Eru's position. Edgar bit his lips and goes into the main topic.

"We... the surviving high school pilots, will be going to Känkänen for an awards ceremony."

Edgar feels conflicted even though he is talking about such a glorious event.

"The Jantunen garrison knights will send representatives as well, probably Sir Hallhagen and a few others. This involves a battalion-level demon beast invasion, a story that worthy to be spread within the nation, no, to all nations. They say there will be a grand ceremony."

"You are right, congratulations... but you seem unhappy about it."

"The existence of the scarlet knight would be covered up for this incident... This means Ernesti's achievements will not be stated."

Stefania wears an apologetic expression and looks at the tea besides her hand. Chid and Ady understands the meaning of these words after a while and glares at Edgar. Only Eru seems unaffected and nods.

"I see. If I was a member of the knights or an official high schooler, there wouldn't be any problems."

"Hey, things will be serious if Eru wasn't there! Why can't he receive commendations?"

Chid stands up in protest. Stefania stops him with a look, sighs and explains:

"Calm down. If a normal knight performs so outstandingly, they will be promoted or commended. For high schoolers, they will be enlisted as an official knight... But we can't promote Eru this way."

"Why? Eru is obviously stronger than those run of the mill knights!?"

"Being a knight means he has to join a band of knights. He can be a member with his exceptional power, but there are few who is willing to work with a 12 year old. Working under an organization means Eru can't be willful in his actions."

"We can work something out if he is an adult... If they pass over the knights and grant honors to a 12 year old, the knights will look bad. The honor of the knights are the honor of the kingdom, no one wants that to happen."

Eru tilts his head and ask with a smile:

"I understand. Senpai are here to convince me?"

The expression of Edgar and Stefania tensed. Eru didn't say much about their expression and continues:

"Let's forget about this incident. I am satisfied with piloting an actual Silhouette Knight. Instead of asking shamelessly for rewards, doing nothing is much more relaxing. Besides, I was the one who butted in without permission. I don't want to be manipulated by others because of this incident."

Stefania nods her head in agreement.

"That won't happen, I guarantee in the name of the Serrati family."

"That's right, I will remind Sir Hallhagen."

Eru nods after receiving their promises. Unlike Eru, Chid and Ady is unable to accept this, asking with a moan:

"Eru, Is this really okay?"

"Yah, Eru's dream is to be a knight and pilot Silhouette Knights correct? Are you giving in now?"

"This is an exceptional case. I don't plan to demand for any rewards."

Seeing Eru consoling the unhappy twins, Edgar and Stefania breathe a sigh of relief. Guyale and behemoth was both destroyed in the battle, a testament to the desperate situation Eru was in. Not giving any reward to Eru doesn't sit well with them either. On the flip side, they understand the order of knights won't be able to handle Eru's exceptional case well. They volunteered to convince Eru of the knights' dilemma in order to avoid using official orders to pressure Eru. They need not worry about Eru protesting violently, but the content of their speech is filled with illogical things, so they are prepared for the talks to stall. They feel grateful over Eru's generous disposition.

(Phew, that was close. I barge ahead without thinking too much, there will be tons of trouble if I made the knights lose face. Giving me a way to reject commendation cordially is a big help...)

Eru who appears to be drinking tea calmly is breaking out in cold sweat. To be honest, he was troubled over how to settle things on his ends. It is hard for Eru to do anything from his position. The other party proposing a peaceful resolution made Eru relieved.

(I did have a great time piloting. I even get to see the magius engine's script, that is enough for a reward. And the knights owe me a favor too. Being too forceful will blow matters up, just let them bask in the glory. Also... it will be good if I can build a close relationship with the knights and the people present.)

Eru finish his tea happily as he thinks about how to resolve the matter.

The atmosphere was peaceful after ending the tense topic. The



sound of cheers was ongoing all this while. They chat casually in the mean time.

-- His conscious recovers slowly. His first thing he feels is a question.

(What... What happened? That time... the demon beast...)

He felt a sharp pain next from all over his body, stimulating his mind and waking him up.

"Eh... Uguu..."

Dietrich groans from the pain of his protesting body and open his eyes. The first thing he sees is a wooden ceiling. He turn his head and observes a white drape. He was still confused, but he understands the situation before him. He was warded in a hospital like facility-- which means he is safe.

(... This means, the battle was won...?)

He shivered when he remembers the giant beast. From the situation at that time, it is impossible to save him without getting rid of the beast. Dietrich deduced from this that the battle ended somehow, and was a success since he is alive.

"Ara, you woke?"

Dietrich relaxed after deducing the crisis ended, and more importantly, he is safe. As he lies down groggily, a voice came from his side.

"This is Jantunen pilot's infirmary. You have lost conscious for over a day after the battle."

Dietrich turns his head with his eyes wide open. It's not because of

the content of the speech, but the person who is saying it--

"Don't worry, you have many bruises, but no serious injuries. You are young and will heal up in no time!"

His white clothes almost bursting from his muscular body, and his hair was crew cut. His feet was shoulder width apart but his knees was clamped together. He is speaking in a feminine way despite having a deep voice-- This is a man.

A scream erupt suddenly and fills the entire infirmary.

A convoy comprising of carriages and Silhouette Knights are travelling along the gravel road leading from Jantunen to the capital -- Fremmevira highway.

Inside the carriage are students from Laihiala pilot academy's Knighthood faculty. The Silhouette Knights are escorts from Jantunen garrison knights. The knights were headed towards the capital for the award ceremony and were acting as escorts since they are heading the same way.

There is a person sitting on the top of one carriage. That person is basking in the sun, watching the long convoy line under the warm sun. At the end of the line is a wagon filled with recovered Silhouette parts. The machine that was wrecked by the behemoth was turned into junk, but the most valuable torso retrieved. The damage was assessed, if the magius engine and ether reactor known as the heart is fine, it will be easier to repair. At worse, they can place the heart into a new body.

Jantunen garrison knight's wreckage had been sent to Jantunen, the ones here are the Laihiala pilot academy's robots.

The boy on top of the carriage, Ernesti looks towards the back with

a blank expression. There must be parts from the scarlet Silhouette Knight on the wagon too, but it is covered by canvas so Eru can't tell where it is. The last scene of the fight with behemoth while piloting Guyale flashed across his mind. He feels the bump of the carriage as he reminisces.

(The action I took was a gamble largely dependent on luck. In order to avoid this, I need a machine that won't fall apart even when operating at full power... and this problem should not be entrusted to others lightly.)

Right now, Eru is the only one who can make a robot break down in such a short time, so he is the only one who wants to resolve it. He will create his personal machine one day. He needs to plan for the arrival of that day.

"Eru, are you brooding over here?"

As he was feeling troubled over many things, someone approach him from behind and hugs him. There is only one person who will do that in Eru's mind. He turns to look at Ady behind him.

"Yeah, I am thinking about how to resolve the weakness in the previous battle."

"Why-- are you thinking about this again!"

Ady looks displeased as she leans forward. Ady is taller than Eru, so Eru is squashed when Ady leans in with her body weight. Eru protest as his body bends forward uncomfortably.

"I know, but I have to think it over when I have time, or it will be a problem in the future."

The pressure behind him relaxes slightly, allowing Eru to breath. Ady stops moving and her displeasure fades, replaced by a troubled

expression.

"... Eru, you really... I hope you can promise me one thing."

"What promise?"

"Don't go by yourself, take us with you!"

"That's a bit..."

Eru can't see Ady's face, but he can feel her sincerity from her voice. Eru didn't turn back and looks ahead, thinking about Ady's request. He has been setting Silhouette Knights as his goals, and working towards that means...

"We might not be able to help, but..."

"Don't say that... it depends on the situation."

"Really? I can't pilot a Silhouette Knight. How about telling us what you plan to do!"

At this point, Eru can't reject her.

"I understand... I will do my best. But it is an emergency, it will have to wait."

"Hmmp! That's a cunning way to put it! Even though we can't do much, but three heads are better than one!"

"Haha, that's right, 3 of us is... 3?"

Ady's casual words made Eru think. In his heart is a famous story, and inspiration strikes.

"3 is better than 1... 3 arrows compared to 1 arrow. One arrow is

easy to break, but it is hard to break if there are three. Right, it is fragile and easy to break because it is separated. That hurts... Wut arf yu dooin?"

Ady pulls both of Eru's cheek as he was spacing out.

"Pay attention when talking to others, that was rude. Hmpf!"

"That hurts... You are absolutely right, that was ill mannered of me."

Ady looks at Eru nursing his cheeks painfully and thought of a good idea. She approached Eru from the side with a smile. Eru has a foreboding feeling looking at Ady's smile.

"Right, I know a way! Teach me how to pilot Silhouette Knights!"

"Wah-- to use this method!"

Eru groans and smiles awkwardly at Ady and wonders how did things come to this.

The roasted beef on the center of the table gives off a delicious aroma.

The cramped place around it is full of dishes. Eru's mother-- Celestina Echevarria is pouring soup into a huge bowl. Besides her is the mother of the twins Ilmatar Olter (Ilma) who arranges the freshly baked pie. The extravagant dishes made the two happy as they lay out the plates.

"Is it time for your Ady to learn to cook?"

"Hoho, it's about time. That child is always messing around with Chid."

The finished the preparation nimbly as they chat and call their family to have dinner. The 2 families gathered shortly after and ate happily.

This is the Echevarria residence. The Echevarrias and the Olters are together for a party to celebrate the safe return of their child. The parents planned to welcome them back after the field trip all along. But the children were involved in an unprecedented demon beast invasion instead.

The faces of every parent turned green when they received the news, including this 2 families. Ilma's only family are the twins, her anxiety is indescribable. She can't stay alone in that state, so the Echevarrias took her in for the time being. Now, both the children and their parents have deepened their friendship.

Fortunately, the crisis was over and the children returned safely, all the families are busy and relieved.

"To be frank, it's great that everyone is safe."

Ilma watch the kids finish off the dishes and sigh. Tears well up in her eyes and fell as she relaxes. Ilma quickly cover her face.

"We made you worry. As you can see, we are not hurt... This is a miracle."

"That's great, the most important thing is that you are safe. Your appetite is good, as if nothing ever happened."

"Nomnomnom!"

"NornNornNorn!"

"Swallow your food before talking..."

Chid and Ady continues to stuff their face despite their mother's instruction. They were eating tasteless preserved food while traveling, so they are focusing on the delicacy before them.

"We heard that it was really dangerous, but you all seem fine. What did Eru do?"

"Yes. Behemoth and I beat each other up."

"Cough! Cough, cough."

Mathias choked on his food when he hears the conversation between the mother and child.

"Ara, wasn't the demon beast really big? Are you okay? Did you give it a good beating?"

"I borrowed a Silhouette Knight from a senpai so I'm okay. It was rather dangerous, but I beat it up really well and won."

"Ara ara, you can borrow Silhouette Knights? That's wonderful Eru. But don't be too reckless. It's not something you can borrow anytime you want right?"

"That's right. Luckily we have that 'good senpai' who aided me."

Mathias forced himself to look away from the two of them, the others casually ignore their conversation. In some way, this family was really disciplined.

Only Eru's grandfather refrained from speaking during dinner, watching everything. After finishing, he called out to Eru.

"Eru, I want you to accompany me to someplace, alright?"

"Okay grandpa. Where are we going?"

"Erm, we are going to..."

Fremmevira Kingdom capital, Känkänen.

Located at the foot of mount Aubigne, it served as a front line fortress in the past. The highway on either side was made with robust stones, a legacy from its days as a fortress. Several layers of walls are erected with the capital at its heart. Only the outer most siege wall has defensive functions, the rest are used for zonal segregation. Its existence is a testament of the history of this city and nation.

In the center of the capital lies 'Castle Shreiber'.

The castle has traces of its days as a fortress, ancient and majestic. Even now, the tough appearance of the fortress commands respect. Its reputation as the 'Kingdom of Knights' are presented harmoniously, allowing all visitors feel the pride of the city.

In the heart of Castle Shreiber is an audience hall for the king to receive his guest.

It is a vast space with a high ceiling, enough for Silhouette Knights to enter comfortably. Elegant drapes are hung on all the walls in fixed interval of the pillars. A red carpet is rolled out in the center, and at its end is the throne for the king. An amazingly big seat is situated behind the throne, with a Silhouette Knight sitting on it.

That is the personal Silhouette Knight of the King -- known as the king's knight 'Raids Of Valor'. Its appearance is more elegant than any machine within Fremmevira. A cape with the same pattern of the national flag covers its shoulders, displaying the majesty of a knight standing at the very peak. Cardiarias piloted by the royal guards are positioned to the side of the hall with Raids of Valor right at the



center, a powerful and intimidating scene.

Sometimes, the hall will be cramped with soldiers and Silhouette Knights, but there are only a few people here today.

A middle aged man was sitting on the throne before Raids of Valor, the 10th king of Fremmevira Kingdom, Ambrosius Tahvo Fremmevira. In front of him are Marquis Joachim Serrati and Jantunen garrison knight's commander Philip Hallhagen. According to customs, they have to address the king while kneeling on one knee with their heads down. After the king grants him permission, Philips raised his head to report.

"That concludes the report of the battle with behemoth."

King Ambrosius acknowledge with a grunt and nod after listening to the detailed report from Philip. He is holding a concise report in his hand and is browsing it as he listens.

"And the carcass of behemoth?"

"Your majesty, it's impossible for the garbage collectors to harvest a colossal beast like behemoth, I have dispatched the Silhouette Knights to assist. It should be completed in the next few days."

"I want to use its carcass to offset our losses. But our casualties are light, considering the opponent is a battalion-level demon beast."

"Your majesty, Jantunen's forces are depleted, please allow me to send some reinforcement to support them."

Ambrosius focused on one point of the report as he listens to Joachim, it is the logs of the scarlet knight and its pilot Ernesti. A baffled expression appears on the king's face.

"Echevarria... Lauri's grandson? What an exceptional performance.

Isn't that right, Philip? It is unbelievable, did this child really topple the demon beast before everyone?"

"Yes your majesty, I saw it with my own eyes. I understand the content seems dubious to your majesty..."

Philip can't give a definite answer to the king with regards to this and his voice grows gradually softer. In fact, Joachim was doubtful as he listens to the conversation between them.

"I don't think you will spin such ridiculous tale, but this makes me worried... Especially this part, rewriting the script in the magius engine. If that's true, that is really marvelous."

"Half of it is rumors, but I saw it myself... and I'm convinced it really happened."

"I heard the same report... Only Sir Hallhagen and the knights know the truth."

Ambrosius close his eyes. The ability to fight a behemoth is amazing, but that is only a might of one man. But it is different if he can reprogram the magic engine, which is a skill that has no precedent.

After thinking it over, he mumbles:

"... This child is too dangerous."

Philip panics when he heard this. Eru literally saved the lives of dozens of pilots with his participation. They can't commend Eru because of the state of things, but Eru accepted it unconditionally, so Philip owes him a favor. He might be a youth that is much younger than him, but having fought as comrades, Philip won't forget how Eru saved his knights.

"You majesty, allow me to report. This boy might be just 12, but he

is knowledgeable and courageous. His etiquette is fine and his peers like him. More importantly, he was always on the front line during the battle with the behemoth..."

Ambrosius stopped Philip's words with a wave.

"Don't worry, I am not planning to do anything to him. It might be fine now, but you say he is just 12 years of age. Having amazing power at such a tender age... Since he is just a 12 years old boy, he might grow wild with his exceptional strength. That's my worry."

Ambrosius is right to be worried. No matter how talented or pure in character, people can change with the passage of time. Especially a 12 years old who is moving into a rebellious and emotional age. If he grows arrogant because of his talent, it will harm him in the end.

But inside Ernesti is a soul with 40 years of experience, so normal conventions don't apply to him. But that is beyond their imagination, so they are worried that Eru will stray from the right path in the future.

"If that's the case, what should we do?"

"Since he doesn't chase mindlessly after glory, he might become a great knight... We need to guide him. It might be unnecessary since Lauri is there. Hmm, alright... Arrange for Ernesti to meet me."

After Ambrosius issues his orders, Joachim and Philip bows and acknowledge.

## **Summary for Knights and Magic Demon Beast Arc**

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One quiet night, at the fortress of Balguerrie, an outpost guarded by 10 Silhouette Knights, where even demon beasts rarely attack, a powerful demon beast called Behemoth charged forth and attacked. The knights guarding the outpost fought to the last. The captain sent some knights as envoys to the

kingdom to inform them of the attack. The captain and the remaining knights fought to the last man. The captain was the last to fall, dealing a crack near the Behemoth's eye before dying to its strongest attack. The beast headed forth towards the kingdom. Ernesti is finally 12 years old and moved to the middle school of the school while Batson remained in the crafting faculty. One day, Ernesti was viewing a mock battle between Silhouette Knights. The arena is crowded with people analyzing the battle. Helvi, a senior student, chats with Ernesti regarding the battle. Ernesti accurately realized that the right arm of Dietrich's Silhouette Knight was sluggish and was not aligned properly. Edgar, the other pilot won again. Di argued with the maintenance crew until Helvi pointed out Ernesti's analysis. Di made another fuss until Edgar lectured him and Di left fuming. Ernesti leaves to meet his classmates and hears about a field trip. He is unaware of this since he is exempted from most of his classes by force. Ady is fuming since she couldn't spend as much time as possible with Eru but brightened up when they grouped together for the field trip. Batson was not participating and so the three headed to the carriages. The location was "Croquet's Forest". Ten Silhouette Knights were deployed to ensure safety. The company spends time leisurely until they reach Jantunen. The caravan restocked on supplies and they continued on their destination. They began setting up tents there and Eru headed to where the Silhouette Knights were stored and met Edgar and they had a chat about Silhouette Knights. Afterwards, Eru left for his tent and went to sleep. At dawn, most students unused to camping were still sleepy while Eru's group was refreshed. And so, they entered the forest. Later, the senior students find themselves under attack by demonic beasts and they group themselves together to fight back. Meanwhile, the 1<sup>st</sup> year students were also under

attack and were panicking until Eru's company helped them recover and began slaughtering demonic beasts. When the pilots hear the noises of battle, they rushed to their aid. They held a meeting and concluded that the seniors would group up to resist in open areas. Eru tagged along while the other two stayed back to defend the 1<sup>st</sup> years. As the seniors battled fiercely, they were nearing their end when Eru and the Silhouette Knights arrived and helped them. Meanwhile, the Commander of Jantunen Garrison Knights heard from an envoy about a Battalion-Class Demonic Beast headed to Cloquet's Forest. As they began discussing, a knight informs them that Laihiala Academy was holding their field trip there. They then decide to gather up their forces first then head there. At Cloquet's Forest, the students form a base camp and began resting after setting up defenses when the stampede was over. They discussed their next course of action, and decided to leave tomorrow. Near dawn, an alarm announcing the arrival of the Behemoth rang and woke up everyone. Making everyone panic, thanks to Eru, they managed to lessen the panic and began evacuating towards the carriages. Edgar and the pilots began battling the Behemoth as a diversion. As the battle continued, several pilots were killed and Dietrich panicked and ran away in fear. Eru intercepted him, knocked him out, and then cracked the Silhouette Knight and headed straight towards the Behemoth. He immediately appears and his surprise attack strikes the Behemoth's eye. Blinding it, and in fury, it rushed towards him. This gave the remaining pilots enough time to escape as Eru prepared for a battle of attrition. Eru enjoys the battle and feeling of piloting a Silhouette Knight. While this happened, the Garrison Knights encounter the students fleeing and learned of where the Behemoth was. They rushed towards the Behemoth to aid the Pilots facing off against it. Eru is battling the Behemoth fiercely, although he had superior speed, he lacked power to attack and his weapon was destroyed. Di who woke up managed to find a sword and Eru took it. The knights then arrived to help and notice Eru fighting. They are in amazement at his skills and noticing them, Eru distracted the Behemoth to turn its back towards them, and grasping his intention and opportunity, the knights began to attack as Eru slipped away. The knights begin an onslaught of magic but the armor of the beast holds on. The knights then prepared their secret weapon but it failed when the Behemoth unleashed its strongest attack. The knight's panic but Eru then rushed towards it. His attacks were effective as the armor was weakened. The

knights recovered morale after seeing Eru's attacks. They renewed their formation. Suddenly, Guell, the Silhouette Knight Ernesti was piloting suddenly had its knee broken due to overuse. The behemoth charges and Eru thought of a plan. He let Di pilot it a bit as he hacked into the Silhouette Knight and constructed a massive spell. Using an electrical current, he killed the Behemoth. The knights cheer but worry about the Pilot of the knight. Edgar, the vice commander, and the commander approach Guell and began offering prayers but Eru blasted off the front armor. Eru used magic to soften the impact and survived. Shocking the knights. Later, Eru was scolded by Chid and Ady for recklessness. The knights were receiving awards but Eru was not due to being a 1<sup>st</sup> year. Although the twins were slightly enraged since Eru was not receiving rewards. But Eru was alright and made the matter slide. Later Dietrich woke up and had a trauma regarding men who look like women. Later, they went home to eat. Their parents were worried and Eru's grandpa was there and said he'll take him to see the King. They rewind back a bit towards the Capital. The commander, Philip reported everything. And the King wishes to see Eru. Worried a bit at his youth and guide him towards the right path if he makes a mistake. Meanwhile, life returns to normal and Eru and Ady began chatting. Ady's feelings for Eru began blossoming this instant.